

INDIAN ÆSTHETICS

Music and Dance

Dr Ashok Da Ranade Archives, Pune



SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY

1966

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Music and Dance

By

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This publication contains the three lectures delivered by Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastri at the Sri Venkateswara University on the 28th, 29th and 30th of September, 1962. I was put in charge of editing and seeing the volume through the press. As I had been abroad for one year, the proofs were mostly read by Dr. V. Varadachari, Sri K. Bhaskara Rao and Sri N. Narasimhan Poti of the Sanskrit Department

The University feels happy in bringing out this publication and hopes that the book will be found useful by general readers as well as those who have special interest in Indian Æsthetics.

TIRUPATI, }
17th February, 1966. } E. R. SREEKRISHNA SARMA,
Professor of Sanskrit.

PREFACE

My aim in this volume is to explain, expand and expatiate upon the Indian concept of Beauty and Æsthetics and its manifestation in the Fine Arts of India. The great Indian æstheticians and metaphysicians realized in their souls and taught in their words that the human soul, like the universe, is an *aṃśa* (part or aspect) of the eternal immortal infinite bliss (*ānanda*) of the Divine Lord. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā that the inanimate universe consisting of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind or intellect and psychic self-consciousness is his *aparā prakṛti* (lower manifestation) whereas the individual soul is his higher manifestation (*parā prakṛti*) and that the individual soul is a part or *aṃśa* of Himself. My aim and desire in this work is to experience and express the above-said divine teaching (*upadeśa*) and also express the following immortal ideology of the great English poet John Keats in his poem *Endymion* :

“ A Thing of beauty is a joy for ever :
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth ”.

MADRAS, }
10th February, 1966. } K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

ABBREVIATIONS

AD. <i>Abhinaya-darpaṇa.</i>	RG. <i>Rasagaṅgādhara.</i>
AN. <i>Akanānūru.</i>	RP. <i>Rk-prātisākhya.</i>
AS. <i>Abhijñāna-sākuntalam.</i>	RV. <i>Rg-veda.</i>
D. <i>Divākaram.</i>	SA. <i>Śilappadikāram.</i>
Dh. <i>Dhvanyāloka.</i>	SD. <i>Sāhitya-darpaṇa.</i>
DR. <i>Daśarūpaka.</i>	SR. <i>Saṅgīta-ratnākara.</i>
KD. <i>Kāvya-darśa.</i>	SV. <i>Śiśupālavadha.</i>
KM. <i>Kāvya-mīmāṃsā.</i>	TA. <i>Taittirīya-āraṇyaka.</i>
KP. <i>Kāvya-prakāśa.</i>	TU. <i>Taittirīya-upaniṣad.</i>
KS. <i>Kāvya-lāṅkāra-sūtras.</i>	V. <i>Vikramorvaśīya.</i>
MBH. <i>Mahābhārata.</i>	VD. <i>Viṣṇudharmottara.</i>
MP. <i>Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa.</i>	VP. <i>Vāyu-purāṇa.</i>
NS. <i>Nāṭya-śāstra.</i>	VR. <i>Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa.</i>
PK. <i>Perumkathai.</i>	VU. <i>Vārāha-upaniṣad.</i>
PP. <i>Paripādal.</i>	YS. <i>Yājñavalkya-smṛti.</i>
PR. <i>Pratāparudrīya.</i>	

INDIAN AESTHETICS

Lecture I

THE ESSENCE OF INDIAN AESTHETICS

Aesthetics is the science of the expression in art of the seen beauty of the universe. The sense of the beautiful is inherent in man. As Wordsworth says "We live by admiration, hope and love" (*The Excursion*: I. 1763). Even in primitive times, man delighted in crude painting, poetry, music and dance. Unlike the animals and birds which are content with and engrossed in the search of food and sex-life, man seeks to know and master the law of Nature. He has a passion for the disinterested pursuit of Truth for its own sake. His emotion of love goes beyond the narrow bounds of sex-life and family life and delights in widening its grounds till it includes the love of the country, of the nation, of humanity and of God. We must, in the language of the great English poet Tennyson,

"Move upward, working out the beast
And let the ape and tiger die".

(In Memorium: CXVIII)

In the language of Indian Philosophy, man has a passion to rise above *tamoguna* and *rajoguna* and to give free play to his *sattvaguna*. It is only then that the inner eye of the intuition opens and he is able to see the beauty of the universe in a spirit of detachment, delight and wonderment. Then he desires to behold the unseen beauty of God and hear the music of the spheres.

"Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear but more endeared
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone".

(Ode to the Grecian Urn)

"The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream"

(Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a Picture).

"The unseen Beauty which no eye can see
And the unheard music which no ear can measure".

Thus the search for beauty is an innate and inherent passion in every human being. But only a few original creative artists have the genius for seeing visions of beauty and expressing them in one fine art or another. But all other persons have a keen sense of literature and art and can appreciate the great artists. They are called in Indian æsthetics as *rasikas* or *sahridayas* (those who can appreciate and enjoy the beautiful). Æsthetics is elusive because there is a considerable subjective and intuitive element in æsthetic valuation. Rhythm, symmetry, harmony, proportion, beauty, grace, etc., are not mere external appearances but are external manifestations of inner spiritual experiences. Beauty, Goodness and Truth are a Trinity in Unity and a Unity in Trinity. It is this interlinkedness of external and physical beauty with innate and spiritual beauty that is the soul of æsthetics both in the West and the East, but its expression is more sweet and perfect in Indian Æsthetics than elsewhere.

Professor Knight Says :

“ In the earlier times, the cause of beauty slumbered, as it did in India, and amongst the Aryan races generally. It is perhaps the more remarkable that it should not have awakened earlier in doing when we remember that almost all the distinctive types of philosophical thought had sprung up, that a monistic as well as a dualistic conception of the world prevailed alongside of the popular thesis and nature-worship. But there is scarcely a trace of feeling for the beautiful in Brahmanical or Buddhist writings ”.

The Philosophy of the Beautiful : II, pp. 16, 17.

Vincent Smith says that the inhabitants of India have always been “ singularly indifferent to æsthetic merit and little qualified to distinguish between good and bad art ”. Nay, even Professor Max Mueller, who was a profound student of the *Vedas*, has remarked. “ The idea of the Beautiful in Nature did not exist in the Hindu mind. It is the same with their descriptions of human beauty. They described what they saw ; they praised certain features, but the Beautiful as such did not exist for them. They never excelled in sculpture or painting They did not mind giving a good ever so many arms to indicate omnipotence It would be quite impossible to render *tohalan* in Sanskrit. *Sobhana* means bright ; *peśala*, variegated ; *ramañña*, pleasant. The beauty of poetry is expressed by *mādhurī*, the sweet things ; the beauty of nature by *śobhā*, splendour. Of course there is goddess of beauty, Śrī and Lakṣmī, but they are both late, and they represent

happiness rather than simple beauty. Even this meagre evidence may be used as showing what is essential for the development of the concept of the Beautiful. But it is strange nevertheless, that a people so fond of the highest abstractions as the Hindus, should never have summarized their perceptions of the Beautiful ”.

I can only say that it is strange that such keen and well-informed interpreters of Indian culture should not have realized that Indian æsthetics has had a history of three millennia and more like Indian metaphysics, and that India reached the world's summit not only in metaphysical concepts but also in æsthetic concepts. *Ramañña* and *ramañnyaka*, *cāru* and *cārutā*, *sundara* and *soundarya* express the concept of beauty as well as the Greek word *tohalan*, if not better. The phrase *satyam śivam sundaram* expresses the essence of the concept of the unity of truth, goodness and beauty. India realized God as *sat-cid-ānanda* (Being, Consciousness and Bliss) and showed truth, goodness and beauty as aspects of spiritual bliss (*ānanda*). A famous verse in the *Lalitopākhyāna* gives us the key-idea which links Indian Æsthetics.

आङ्गिकं भुवनं यस्य वाचिकं सर्ववाङ्मयम् ।

आहार्यं चन्द्रतारादि तं नुमः सात्त्विकं शिवम् ॥

(Let us bow to the good God Śiva whose limbs are the universe, voice is all speech and whose decorative ornaments are the moon and the stars.)

Even in Art, man began by imitating Nature and ended by transcending Nature. He began with the imitation of Nature, passed on to the decoration of the seen and finally ascended to the creative vision of the unseen. While Greece delighted in the beauty of the seen and perfected the arts of architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, drama and dance in a spirit of imitation of Nature, India strained every nerve to behold the unseen and present it in Art. In Greece, Plato urged that our love of what is externally beautiful is due to our Art's search for absolute and archetypal beauty. Plotinus carried Plato's ideas even further. But Aristotle held Art to be an imitation of Nature though the æsthetic notion is pure, disinterested and universal. In medieval and modern Western art, we find attempts by artists and æstheticians to pass beyond the seen. Goethe says, “ Beauty is inexpressible ; it is a hovering, fleeting, and glittering shadow, whose outlines elude the grasp of definition ”. “ Art is called art, simply

because it is not Nature". Schelling says that Art conducts us from the vestibule of reality into the innermost shrine and reveals the transcendental to our vision. According to him, Art is its own authority and is original and creative. Hegel says that Beauty is the revelation of the mind through the sensuous forms. Art is the divine superstructure built on the groundwork and basement of Nature. Art does not merely imitate reality. It idealizes, transfigures and divinizes reality.

It is neither possible nor necessary in this brief discourse to go in detail into the views of other artists and writers on Art. I may, however, refer to a few of them. The Frenchman Prere Andre says that there are three kinds of beauty: divine beauty, natural beauty and artificial beauty. Diderot says that Art cannot always imitate Nature because Nature is always changing and that art suggests more than it can express. A. C. Quaxtremere De Quincey remarks that beauty is only a tangible form of the true and the good. According to Levegue, beauty is something invisible beyond Nature. He says: "The whole world is the work of an absolute Beauty which is only the cause of things by the love it puts into them".

Italy is famous for its excellence in painting. Leonardo Davinci says that "that drawing is best which best expresses the passion that animates the figure". Michael Angelo states: "Beauty is the purgation of superfluities". According to Bellori, Nature never realizes perfect beauty because of the imperfections of its material and that hence artists seek to realize the idea "which is the goddess of Painting and Sculpture". Pagaro declares that Art consists in uniting the beauties dispersed in Nature. Rosamini observes that we discern beauty in the world of the real and seek to transcend it in the realm of the ideal. To Croce, Art is independent of Science and the useful and the moral.

In England, Bacon states: "That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the eye". He says also: "In Art, we have 'the show of things submitted to the desire of the mind', and 'Art pleases by exhibiting an ideal more graceful to the mind than the things themselves afford'". Berkeley says that all minds have the ideas of order and harmony and proportion. Sir Joshua Reynolds remarks: "Perfect Beauty, in my opinion, must combine all the characters which are beautiful in the species". According to Coleridge, "Beauty is harmony and results from the

pre-established harmony between Nature and Man". Carlyle says: "In all the works of art, we discern Eternity looking through Time, the God-like rendered visible", "All art is the disimprisoned soul of Fact" and "The Fine Arts divorcing themselves from Truth are quite certain to fall mad, if they do not die". Ruskin stresses the vitally inter-connected character of art, ethics and social life. To him beauty is spiritual and typifies the attributes of God. He says well: "Life without industry is sin, and industry without art is brutality". J. A. Lymond observes: "There is a beauty which is never found in Nature but which requires a working of human thought to elicit it from Nature". E. Burne Jones, the great painter says: "It is the message, the burden of a picture that makes its real value". The great painter Turner states: "The values are entirely spiritual!"

In America, Emerson says: "Truth and Goodness and Beauty are but different facets of the same All" and "The sensual man conforms thoughts to things; the poet conforms things to his thoughts". George Santayana remarks: "The artist being a born lover of the good, a natural breeder of perfections, clings to his insight. He has moulded existence into the likeness of thought and lost himself in that ideal achievement which, so to speak, beckons all things into being". G. S. Morris says: "Art is not representation of something seen but the representation of something which we would like to see, which is akin to our nature, towards which our truest being strives". According to Professor Dewey, æsthetic feeling excludes the feeling of ownership as well as utility and is characterized by harmony and creativeness.

Art seeks to express its intuitions by adequate symbols. For instance, the straight line symbolizes infinity, the curve beauty and the circle the finite. Further, Art delights in imitating Nature but finds a greater delight in adding to Nature. Architecture, sculpture and painting deal with space, whereas poetry and music deal with time. In architecture, art seeks to express its soaring aspiration in soaring spires and domes. In sculpture, it seeks to express its creative vision of unseen beauty. In painting, it adds wonderful colour-creations. In poetry, it seeks to express its visions of the ideal. In music, which is the most subjective of the arts, man frees himself from tyranny of nature. Man alone has creative melody. The medium of music is the wonderful human voice which is adequately responsive to his inner creativeness. Thus music is the most subjective of all the fine arts and all arts appeal to the universal and divine element in man.

It seems to me that Indian Æsthetics contains all these ideas and transcends them. Swami Vivekananda points out how in India, a vast and wonderful country protected by the Himalayas, which form the highest mountain in the world and is surrounded by the ocean on the other three sides, man beheld the universe with awe and wonder and sought in intense moods of introspection the Invisible, Infinite, Eternal and Absolute Beauty of which the visible, finite, fleeting and changing and relative beauty of the universe is only an imperfect manifestation.

In the *Bhagavadgītā* (XII. 8), there is a significant concept. Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, he cannot see the infinite beauty of God with his limited human vision and that He will bestow on him the vision and faculty divine with which alone man can behold God.

The poets, artists, sages, seers and saints have this divine cosmic vision and create works of art and give us prophetic visions of the glory of God. In the *Puruṣa-sūkta* which is an exalted poem as well as religious scripture, the poet-saint says: "I know the Great Being who shines beyond all darkness".¹ The Vedic seers realized that the source of creation was God as Bliss (*ānanda* or *sat-cid-ānanda*)².

The æsthetic concept of *rasa* corresponds to the spiritual concept of *ānanda* just as the reflection (*pratibimba*) corresponds to the original. Just as the white light is broken up by a prism into seven beautiful variegated colours, the spiritual *ānanda* shines refracted as nine *rasas* in the human mind. The word *rasa* also is equated to *ānanda*.³ *Rasa* is the æsthetic perception of the beautiful. Æsthetic joy is disinterested and is superterrestrial (*alaukika*) and is thus higher than sensual pleasure. It is hence said to be cognate to *brahmānanda* (divine bliss). The Sanskrit word for beauty is *soundarya* or *ramaṇīyatā* (attraction) or *cārutā* (loveliness) as already stated above. It is called *azhagu* in Tamil. The great Sanskrit poet Māgha says that the beautiful is what charms us in ever-new ways moment after moment.⁴ Kālidāsa says in his great drama *Śākuntala* that in our enjoyment of art there is also the element of reminiscence due to our experiment of beauty in other births.⁵ All finite beauty is but an aspect of the Infinite and Absolute beauty of God. The poets and artists are creators of loveliness

1. *Puruṣasūkta* cf. TA. III, 12.7.

2. TU. III. 6.

3. *ibid.*, II. 7.

4. SV. IV. 17.

5. AS. V. 2.

and give us creations rivalling and surpassing the loveliness of Nature.⁶ Mammata says that the speech of the poem creates a world which is not fettered by the laws of Destiny, which is of the very essence of joy, which is self-existent and not dependent on any thing else and which brings into existence a creation shining with the nine *rasas*.⁷

It is also aptly said that while scripture commands like a king (*prabhu-sammīta*) and the *Purāṇas* advise like a friend (*suhṛt-sammīta*), Art charms us like a youthful, loving and beloved wife (*kāntā-sammīta*).⁸

The supreme æsthetician Bharata analyses the *rasa* concept, very clearly in his great and original work *Nāṭya-śāstra*. The works on rhetorics in Sanskrit are innumerable and show a remarkable evolution. I shall show later on how the *rasa* school was followed by the *alaṅkāra* school dealing with the figures of speech, the *rīti* school which deals with style, the *vakrokti* school which deals with the indirect elegant expression of mood, the *dhvani* school which deals with literary suggestiveness and the *aucitya* school which deals with what is fitting and appropriate in expression.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIAN ÆSTHETICS

Nandikeśvara is generally referred to as the progenitor and patron-god of Indian æsthetics, just as Hanūmān and Nārada are said to be the progenitors and patron-gods of Indian music. Rājasekhara's *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā*⁹ makes Śiva Himself the founder and teacher of æsthetics. Kāśyapa and Vararuci are said to have left works on æsthetics which are not extant now.

The earliest treatise on æsthetics now available is Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*. Kālidāsa refers to Bharata in his *Vikramorvaśīya*¹⁰. He says that Bharata referred to eight *rasas*. The number of *rasas* became nine afterwards by including *sāntā-rasa*. Later on, *bhakti-rasa* was added as *ujjvala-rasa* by Rūpa Gosvāmin. Later on *preyas* (friendship) and *vātsalya* (love for the young) were included. Kālidāsa belonged to the first century B.C. as shown by me in my two volumes on him published by Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam. Bharata was

6. Cf. Dh. p. 498, Chowkhamba edition.

7. KP. I.1.

8. PR. I.3.

9. KM. 1.

10. V. II.18.

anterior to him and probably belonged to the third century B.C. It was he, that elaborated the concept of *rasa*. According to him, there are eight *rasas*: *śṛṅgāra* (love), *hāsyā* (comic), *karuṇā*, (pathos), *raudra* (fury), *vīra* (heroism), *bhayānaka* (terror), *bībhatsa* (disgust) and *adbhuta* (the marvellous). The *sthāyī-bhāva* (dominant emotion), after having been stimulated and made enjoyable by *vibhāvas* (principal stimulating causes), *anubhāvas* (external manifestations), *sāttivika-bhāvas* (prominent physical effects), and *sañcāri-bhāvas* called also *vyabhicāri-bhāvas* (ever-changing minor collateral feelings), becomes *rasa*.¹¹ *Vibhāvas* are either *ālambāna-vibhāvas* (principal exciting causes) or *uddīpana-vibhāvas* (accessory exciting causes). Thus *rasa* means æsthetic enjoyability. Bharata's aphoristic statement¹² sums up the above exposition in what is called *rasa-sūtra*.

Bhaṭṭi probably belonged to the 5th century A.D. The tenth canto of his *kāvya* dealing with the *Rāmāyaṇa* story is called the *Prasannakāṇḍa* and contains illustrations of thirty-eight *alaṅkāras* (figures of speech).

Bhāmaha is the next great figure in æsthetics and rhetoric. In his *Kāvyaṅkāra*, he elaborates fully the theory of the *alaṅkāras* (figures of speech). Daṇḍin, the author of *Kāvyaḍarśa*, belonged to the same epoch. The next great figure is Udbhaṭa, the author of the *Alaṅkāra-sāra-saṁgraha*. He flourished about 800 A.D. In his work, he dealt with forty-one figures of speech. Pratihārendurāja has written a commentary on it.

Vāmana's *Kavyāṅkāra-sūtras* and his *Vṛtti* are of great value. He affirmed that *rīti* (style) is the soul of poetry.¹³ He belonged to the 8th century A.D.

Rudraṭa, who wrote the *Kavyāṅkāra*, belonged to the 9th century A.D. Rudrabhaṭṭa, the author of *Śṛṅgāra-tilaka*, probably belonged to the 10th century A.D.

Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* (9th century) is the masterpiece of æsthetics and rhetoric. This work is divided into three parts, namely, *kārikas* (brief statements), *vṛtti* (expositions) and illustrations. Abhinavagupta (10th century) wrote a commentary called *Locana* on the work.

11. DR. IV.1.

12. Cf. NS. VI.

13. KS. I.2.6.

Rājaśekhara wrote the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* and Mukulabhaṭṭa the *Abhidhā-vṛttimātrkā*. Bhaṭṭa Tauta's *Kāvya-kautuka* and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's *Hṛdaya-darpaṇa* have not yet been recovered. The former held the view that *śānta-rasa* was the most important of the *rasas* as it led to *mokṣa* (spiritual liberation). Dhanañjaya's famous work *Daśa-rūpaka* deals with Indian dramaturgy. Kuntaka who wrote the *Vakrokti-jīvita* held the view that *vakrokti* (charming turn of expression) is the soul of poetry. All these authors flourished round about 10th century A.D.

Rajānaka Mahima Bhaṭṭa's *Vyakti-viveka*, Bhoja's *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* and *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* and Kṣemendra's *Aucitya-vicāra-carcā* and *Kavikaṇṭābhāraṇa* belonged to the 11th century A.D. Mahima Bhaṭṭa attacked the concept of *dhvani* (suggested sense) and held that it is only an inference from the expressed meaning. Kṣemendra held that *aucitya* (appropriateness) is the essence of poetry.

Mammaṭa, who was a native of Kashmir and belonged to the latter half of the 11th century A.D., is the author of the great work *Kāvya-prakāśa*. Ruyyaka, the author of the *Alaṅkāra-sarvasva* belonged to the middle of the 12th century A.D. He wrote the *Kāvya-prakāśa-saṅketa*, a commentary on Mammaṭa's work, *Alaṅkāra-mañjarī*, a commentary on the *Vyakti-viveka*, *Nāṭaka-mīmāṃsā*, *Sahṛdaya-mīmāṃsā* and *Alaṅkāra-vārttika*.

Hemacandra and Vāgbhaṭa are well-known Jain writers on æsthetics. Hemacandra lived from 1088 A.D. to 1177 A.D. and wrote *Kavyā-nuśāsana* with *Alaṅkāra-cūḍāmaṇi*. The latter belonged to the 12th century and wrote *Vāgbhaṭāṅkāra*. The works are compilations in the main. Amaraçandra's *Kavita-rahasya* and Deveśvara's *Kavikalpalatā* belonged to the 13th century. Bhānudatta's *Rasa-taraṅgiṇī* and Vidyādhara's *Ekāvalī* belonged to the same century. Mallinātha wrote a commentary on the *Ekāvalī*. Jayadeva's famous *Candrāloka* belonged to the same century. On it, the great polymath Appayya Dikṣita wrote a famous commentary called *Kuvalayānanda*. *Citra-mīmāṃsā* and *Vṛtti-vārttika* are also his works. In the *Kuvalayānanda*, he discussed 124 figures of speech, which is the largest number discussed in any work on poetics. Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* discussed also dramaturgy in great detail. He also wrote *Kāvya-prakāśa-darpaṇa*, which is a commentary on Mammaṭa's work.

Vāgbhaṭa's *Kāvyanuśāsana* and its commentary *Alaṅkāra-tilaka* written by himself belonged to the 14th century. Of the same era, is

Vidyānātha's *Pratāparudra-yaśobhūṣaṇa*. In this, all the illustrative verses glorify the Kākatīya king Pratāparudra. Mallinātha's son Kumārasvāmin wrote on it a commentary called *Ratnāpāṇa* in the 15th century.

The last great work on æsthetics is Jagannātha's *Rasa-gaṅgādhara*. In his *Citramīmāṃsā-khaṇḍana*, he attacked Appayya Dikṣita's *Citramīmāṃsā*. Appayya Dikṣita's nephew Nilakaṇṭha Dikṣita defended the *Citramīmāṃsā* in his *Citramīmāṃsā-doṣa-dhikkāra*.

Other works on poetics are *Kāvya-pradīpa* of Govinda, *Bhāva-prakāśanam* of Śāradātanaya, *Rasārṇava-sudhākara* of Śiṅgabhūpala, *Nāṭaka-candrikā* and *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* of Rūpa Gosāvaṃin; *Alaṅkāra-Kaustubha* of Kavi Karpūra; *Kāvya-candrika* of Kavicaṇḍa; *Alaṅkāra-Kaumudī* of Vallabha Bhaṭṭa, *Alaṅkāra-śekhara* of Keśava Miśra, and *Kāvya-darpaṇa* of Rajacūḍamaṇi Dikṣita. Acyutarāya's *Sāhitya-sāra* belonged to 1831 A.D.

P. V. Kane's excellent edition of *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* gives a list of 872 works on æsthetics. Most of these are not now extant. I found in the Saraswati Mahal, Tanjore, some other works on æsthetics and also some works on erotics. The Tamil work *Daṇḍialaṅgāram* is based on Daṇḍin's Sanskrit work.

The various schools of æsthetics in India show how Indian æsthetics, like the Indian metaphysics, has had a continuous evolution for many millennia. I can do no more than refer to them here, because it is an intricate subject and I have discussed them elaborately in my other works, *Indian Æsthetics* published by the Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam, and *The Indian Concept of the Beautiful*. In the former work, I said :

“ The later development of æsthetic doctrine was in the direction of *rasa* and *dhvani*. This was inevitable. In Indian æsthetics as in Indian metaphysics the progression was towards the innermost love of being. It reached the doctrine of *rasa* in the former and the doctrine of *ātman* in the latter. The later history of exposition of the doctrine of *rasa* and *dhvani* and of the working out of the nature of æsthetic beauty from within outwards”. (p. 84). Further, “ To the concept of *rasa*, the *dhvani* school gave an added grace by the concept of *dhvani*. The real charm of poetry is the element of suggestion which enriches the *rasa* element. The æsthetic elements of *alaṅkāra*, *guṇa*, *rasa* and *dhvani* combine to make kinetic our potential *vāsanā*

(impressions) of beauty and emotional realization; and the resultant energy of æsthetic enjoyment is the *rasa-āsvāda* or *rasa* enjoyment. . . . Such æsthetic delight is different from the delight of the senses in which there is the element of selfishness of impulse and shortage of duration. It is more akin to spiritual bliss but it is less intense and less immortal than the *ānanda* (bliss) of the soul.

Thus *dhvani* is the *vyāṅgyārtha* or the suggested sense. The æsthetic mood (*rasa*) rose from an ornament of speech and the soul (*rasa*) was afterwards found to be ensouled by an Oversoul (*dhvani*). *Dhvani* may further be *vastu-dhvani* (a suggested thought), or *alaṅkāra-dhvani* (a suggested grace of expression) or *rasa-dhvani* (a suggested æsthetic and emotional mood). The last is the highest of all. The *guṇas* and *alaṅkāras* are the *aṅgas* (limbs) of the suggested *rasa*. . . . The *dhvani* school says that *guṇas* heighten *rasa* and *alaṅkāras* embellish *rasa* (*ibid.*, pp.86—90).

These various views were given out and embellished from time to time. Vāmana¹⁴ says: *Rītirātmā kāvyasya* (Style is the soul of poetry). Viśvanātha¹⁵ says: *Vākyam rasātmakam kāvyam* (Poetry is speech ensouled by *rasa*). Ānandavardhana¹⁶ says: *Kāvyaśya ātma dhvani* (suggestion is the soul of poetry). Jagannātha¹⁷ says: *Ramaṇīyārtha-pratipāḍakaḥ śabdaḥ kāvyam* (Poetry is words conveying beautiful sense). These pithy aphoristic sayings give us the truth of art visualized from different angles of perfection and are not mutually exclusive or contradictory. But the summit ideas among them all are the *pratibhā* (the creative originality of poetic imagination) and *rasa-dhvani* (suggested sweetness of poetic emotion).

“ If I may venture to suggest a principle of co-ordination of views on these vital points of Æsthetics, I may say that *rasa* is the soul of the goodness of Art; *vyāṅgya* or *dhvani* is her life; *guṇas* are her mental qualities; *śabdārtha* are her body; *arthālaṅkāras* are her natural ornaments such as brilliance of complexion, beauty of tresses, beauty of forehead and eyes, dimpled chin, rose-red bloom of lips, lissom figure and charm of gait are natural graces of womanhood and *śabdālaṅkāras* are her beauty of dress and decoration. Any attempt to exalt any one of the elements at the expense or to the exclusion of others

14. KS. I.2.6.

15. SD. I.19.

16. Dh. I.1.

17. RG. p. 6.

cannot but stultify itself. The above analysis is but a many-sided and multifaceted presentation of unity, because the personality of the Goddess of Poetry is a divine unity in a divine variety". (ibid., pp. 97, 98).

I have already shown how in the case of a poet the most important trait is not learning (*vyutpatti*) or practice but *pratibhā* (originality and creative imagination). *Pratibhā* is defined as innate (*naisargikī*) in Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaadarśa*.¹⁸ It is the mental power which is capable of the ever-new forms of visualization and presentation.

प्रज्ञा नवनवोन्मेषशालिनी प्रतिभा मता ।

A well-known Sanskrit verse says that in the infinite cosmos of poetry, the creator is the poet. The universe is as it appears to him.¹⁹

अपारे काव्यसंसारे कविरेकः प्रजापतिः ।

यथास्मै रोचते विश्वं तथेदं परिवर्तते ॥

The poet converts by the creative power of imagination the ordinary terrestrial power of real vision (*lokadharmā*) into the super-terrestrial power of idealistic-like vision (*nāṭyadharmā*).

The aspects referred to above are excellently combined in a famous verse in Bhoja's *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhā-bharaṇa* :

निर्दोषं गुणवत् काव्यमलङ्कारैरलङ्कृतम् ।

रसान्वितं कविः कुर्वन् कीर्तिं प्रीतिं च विन्दति ॥ (I. 2)

(The poet who creates poetry which is free from æsthetic defects and full of fine æsthetic merits and which is full of *rasa* will get fame and satisfaction).

I may refer also to two words, namely,—*sāhitya* and *sahṛdaya* or *rasika*. *Sāhitya* is not only the co-ordination of word and sense²⁰ but also the companionship of the soul of man and the soul of poetry. A *sahṛdaya* or a *rasika* (art enjoyer) is the emotionally inseparable friend and companion of a *kavi* (poet). It is worth remembering also that Mammata says in his *Kāvya-prakāśa* that the *upadeśa* of art is like the *upadeśa* of beloved (charming graceful and irresistible).

कान्तासम्मिततयोपदेशयुजे

(I. 2)

18. KD. I, 103.

19. Dh. III, p. 498.

20. KS. I. 16

He says also that it destroys all inauspiciousness.

शिवैतरक्षतये

(ibid.)

I may mention also that Art is said to give all the aims of the human life at one and the same time.

चतुर्वर्गफलप्राप्तिः²¹

(SD, I.)

I may mention in conclusion that Indian æstheticians regard the drama as the finest and greatest form of poetry. Aristotle considers the tragedy as the highest form of poetry. The drama has a visual appeal in addition to an auditory and emotional appeal. A drama is called a *drśya-kāvya*. But we must not forget that it is the beauty of the poetry in a drama that constitutes its greatest charm. Of course, the charm is heightened by appropriate acting, scenic effects, etc. In the words of Abhinavagupta, it is the enjoyment of *rasa* (*rasa-āsvāda*) that gives æsthetic joy and while we have it in poetry we have in drama the summit of *rasa*-realization including all its elements with the addition of the powerful element of visual appeal, as in the words of the great English poet "things seen are mightier than things heard". The greatest of the classical poets of India, Kālidāsa sums up thus the universal glory of the fine art of dance-drama.

देवानामिदमामनन्ति मुनयः कान्तं क्रतुं चाक्षुषं

रुद्रेणेदमुमाकृतव्यतिकरे स्वाङ्गे विभक्तं द्विधा ।

त्र्यैगुण्योद्भवमत्र लोकचरितं नानारसं दृश्यते

नाट्यं भिन्नरुचेर्जनस्य बहुधाप्येकं समाराधनम् ॥

(Mālavikāgnimitra, I. 4.)

(The sages regard it as the eye-pleasing worship dear to the Gods ; God Siva as *ardhanārīśvara* has shown its dual aspect in his own form. In it we see life based on the three *guṇas* and full of the nine *rasas* ; and it pleases men who have diverse tastes.)

21. SD. I

INDIAN MUSIC

Lecture II

THE ESSENCE OF INDIAN MUSIC

We can understand and enjoy the essence of Indian music and dance best if we understand the essence of the Indian fine arts as a whole and of Indian æsthetics. Art is the manifestation and expression of beauty and Æsthetics is the science of artistic self-expression. In India, art has always been an ally and illuminator of religion. *Saṅgīta* (music) was regarded as a charming and easy path of *yoga* (union with God). *Yājñavalkya* says :

वीणावादनतत्त्वज्ञः श्रुतिजातिविशारदः ।

तालज्ञश्चाप्रयासेन मोक्षमार्गं स गच्छति ॥ (YS, III. 4. 115)

(He who knows the truth about *vīṇā-play* and the science of *śrutis*, *jāti* and *tāla* (rhythm) treads an easy path of salvation.)

Another fact which shows the same truth is the statement about the four *Upa-vedas* (accessory scriptures) namely, *Dhanur-veda* (the science of archery), *Āyur-veda* (the science of medicine), *Gāndharva-Veda* (the science of music), and *Arthā-śāstra* (the science of political economy). Some hold the *Vāstu-śāstra* (the science of architecture) as the fourth *Upa-veda* in the place of *Artha-śāstrā*. The significance of this ideology is that we must protect the state and make it wealthy so as to make the people live a life of health and joy. Only then will religion make for happiness here and beyond.

The Hindu gods and goddesses are inseparably connected with the fine arts. Goddess *Sarasvatī* is described as playing on the *vīṇā* with two hands and having a book and a rosary in the other two hands. *Natarāja* (an aspect of God *Śiva*) is the deity of dance. *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* plays on the *vīṇā*.

Śrī Rāma is described by *Vālmīki* as a supreme musician.

गान्धर्वे च भुवि श्रेष्ठो बभूव भरताग्रजः । (VR, II. 35)

So was also *Hanūmān*. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* is the supreme divine flute-player. He not only danced the *rāsa* dance but also danced on the head of the serpent *Kāliya*. The *Bhāgavata*²² describes *Nārada* as singing and

22. Bh. I. 6. 38, 39.

also playing on the *vīṇā*, the song intensifying his devotion and devotion intensifying his song.

The *bhakti* movement spread all over India from the time of the *Vedas* and especially in the period of the *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas* and *Āgamas*. In the medieval India it grew very powerful. It is a strange fact that in India external rule went along with and was counterbalanced, nay, overruled, by inner freedom, power and happiness. In South India, especially in Tamil Nad, the *Śaiva* and *Vaiṣṇava* mystics took the new manifestation of spiritual force to supreme heights. The same tidal wave swept over Western India and Northern India as well. The Musical Trinity of South India, *Tyāgarāja*, *Muthusvāmi Dīkṣita* and *Śyāma Śāstrin* lifted Indian music to sweet and sublime spiritual heights. So did *Tukārām* and *Mirā Bai*, *Caitanya* and others, in Western and Northern India. Their music expressed itself in diverse forms such as *abhaṅgas*, *kṛtis*, *kīrtanas*, *tarāṅgas*, *padas*, etc. The so-called Hindustani music is not in essence different from the so-called Carnatic music, though they differ in form. Carnatic music does not mean that it is a product of *Karṇāṭaka* but means merely the southern style of music which is loyal to the essence of Indian music. Similarly *Bharata-nāṭya* of Tamil Nad is more in accord with *Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra* than the other styles of Indian dance. In Hindustani music, as in the North Indian dances, there was the Persian influence at work. *Amir Khusru* invented the *sitār* for such music, while South India kept up the *vīṇā*. In North Indian music, each *rāga* has a presiding god and each *rāginī* has a presiding goddess. The divinity presiding over each *rāga* is minutely described in regard to its form, function and power. It is said also that each tune has its appropriate time of the day and season of the year for expression. Each *rāga* is a melody-mould and has its ascending and descending notes and its *jīva-svara* (life-note).

It is noteworthy that Indian music and dance influenced not only South-East Asia and especially the island of Bali, but also the world to the west of India. The Greeks themselves attributed much of their music to India. (See *strabo*, X. 111). Their music resembled the Indian music in the realization of the relation of music to emotion and of the interrelation of art, morality and religion. They also know, like Indians, the curative and therapeutic power of music but the Indians knew better about the spiritual value of music. Their music divides the octave into twenty-four equal intervals while Indian music is based on twenty-two intervals.

Indian music classifies the units of sound as *vāḍī* (sonant), *saṁvāḍī* (consonant), *viśaṁvāḍī* (dissonant) and *anuvāḍī* (assonant). A well-known Sanskrit verse says that *śruti* is the mother and *laya* is the father of music. The ancient name for a musical mode is *mūrchanā*. Kālidāsa refers to it in his famous drama *Mālavikāgnimitra*.

निर्हादिन्युपहितमध्यमस्वरोत्था
मायूरी मदयति मूर्च्छना मनांसि

(I. 20)

The ancient *grāma-mūrchanā-jāti* system was in vogue at first. Later the concept of varied *rāgas* became dominant. It led later on to *rāga-ālāpana* and *manodharma-saṅgīta* in which musician's originality of mind and creative exposition of a *rāga* had full play.

India has investigated also the interrelations of *rāga* (tune) and *rasa* (emotion). In the West, Collins' famous poem on *The Passions* brings out the same fact. (*The English Poets*, Edited by Ward, Volume III. page 289). But what is important is to know the emotional value, in addition to the total value of each note. Some persons think that there is no such value and that each *rāga* can be used for manifesting any emotion by mere variation of tempo in song. Others urge that there is such a value and that the *rāga*, *Mukhāri*, is particularly fitted to express the emotion of grief, sorrow and melancholy. Probably much depends on the intuition of the artists and their successful expression of emotions by particular tunes. We see the same truth in poetry also. Kālidāsa expressed Rati's emotion of grief in the *Viyoginī* metre in his epic poem *Kumāra-sambhava*. After reading those verses, we realize that that metre is the most appropriate vehicle for such emotion. Kālidāsa appropriately uses, in his poem *Megha-sandēśa*, the *Mandākrāntā* metre (the name itself suggests slow movement) to express the moods of longing, reverie and melancholy. In his *Nāṭya-sāstra*, Bharata throws light on *svaras*, *rāgas* and *rasas*. The matter has to be fully investigated by musical experts hereafter.

Indian music differs from Western music in some vital respects. Indian music is horizontal and delights in successive notes while Western music is vertical and delights in simultaneous notes. The Indian musician is absorbed in the *daśa gamakas* (ten grace-notes), *rāga-ālāpana* (musical improvisation of tunes) and *tāla* (time-measures). The essence of a *rāga* depends on its *jīva-svara* (vital life-centre note), its *mūrchanā* (melodic frame-work) and its *sañcāras* (characteristic note-combinations). The *rāga-ālāpana* gives the widest scope for the

improvisation of melody. The Indians used not only tones and semi-tones but also quarter tones. Rev. H. A. Popley says: "The strange and fascinating graces or *gamakas* have a great deal to do with the haunting beauty of Indian music". (*The Music of India*, Chapter VI, page 85, lines 1—3). Mrs. Mann observes: "I am told that all Indian music is melancholy. How can I convey to you the spirit which is sad without pain? That is the delicious melancholy of Indian music. Can a lover be joyful away from his beloved? Can a musician sing joyfully, really joyfully, while he wanders on the earth? Would it not be sorrow if he forgot his exile? Is not the remembrance of the face of his beloved more dear, though fraught with the pain of separation?" Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy remarks equally well: "Its sorrow is without tears, its joy without exaltation, and it is passionate without loss of serenity".

North Indian or Hindustani music and South Indian or Carnatic music are both Indian in essence and are alike in the vital aspects though, apparently, diverse in form. The latter flourished in South India where Muslim conquest did not extend and has been fully loyal to the classical Indian traditions, whereas the former felt the influence of Persian and Arabic music. It is natural that each should be loyal to its traditions and ideals. The similar differences are found between the South Indian *Bharata-nāṭya* and the North Indian styles of dance. In Hindustani music, *drupād* is sung in slow tempo whereas *khyāl* is light and quick in movement. The *drupād* required the use of three octaves and there is an old saying to the effect that only a man who has got the strength of five buffaloes can sing the *drupād*. The voice-production is carefully attended to in the Hindustani music, whereas Carnatic music and especially the music of its supreme masters excel in *svara*-singing, *gamakas* and *saṅgātis*. *Tumri*, *tappa* and *ghazal* are other North Indian musical forms and styles.

Modern South Indian music begins with Purandara Dās, the famous Kārṇāṭaka composer. It is said that he composed 4,75,000 *krtis* (songs). He was a great devotee of God Viṭṭhala of Pandarpur and his devotion to God is as wonderful as his mastery of music.

The devotional life-centre of Indian music is seen with its full beauty and power in Śrī Tyāgarāja's songs which exhibit the perfection of beauty, art and devotion. He says *nāḍopāsana* (worship of God manifested as sound) is the easiest and most pleasurable path to beatitude. His songs *nāḍa-sudhā-rasa* (the ambrosial flavour of music),

mokṣamu galadū (is not *mokṣa* open to the path of music?), *svavararāga-sudhā-rasa* (the ambrosial flavour of *svara* and *rāga*), *śobhilla sapta-svaramu* (the shining seven *svaras* or notes), etc., show that we can rise to the realization of *Onkāra-nāda* and the *daśa-nādas* (ten divine sounds) culminating in the *vīṇā-nāda* (the sound of the *vīṇā*) and the *veṇu-nāda* (the sound of the flute) and thus attain the infinite and divine bliss of liberation and spiritual realization. *Tyāgarāja's* sublime devotion to Śrī Rāma shines in every one of his songs. He refers in one of his songs to *ramakathā-sudhārasa-pānā* (drinking the sweet nectar of *Rāma-kathā*) and says that the ocean of the bliss of *Rāma-kathā* includes and transcends the essence of *śṛṅgāra-rasa* (human love). His devotion to Śrī Rāma ascends to the heights of *mādhurya-bhāva* and *prema-bhakti* from the lower steps of *śāntā*, *dāsya*, *sakhya* and *vātsalya*. The other two members of the musical trinity of South India are supreme composers and have given us wonderfully melodious songs. Kṣetrajña is said to have composed more than 4,000 *padas*.

We can now easily understand why the Indians have a religious passion for the fine arts and especially for music and dance and why the fine arts have religion as their very heart and centre. Miss Anne O. Wilson says: "The people of India are an essentially musical race The Indian has the most subtle ear for tune and an acuteness of musical learning". The celebrated Western violinist Yehudi Manuhin says: "The natural sensitivity of people combined with their deep musical understanding makes them an ideal concert audience The reaction of the Indian audience is quite different from that of British or a Continental audience. I felt that the people who came to hear me in India were sharing a common emotion. Although many could have had little experience of western music, it seemed they had an instinctive appreciation of our musical values". As for the Indian musician, Mrs. Mann says, that he seems to concentrate upon his very inmost self in the exercise of his art. His eyes close often in prayerful ecstasy.

THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN MUSIC

Indian music had its origin many millennia ago and has had a continuous evolution. Though it has changed in the course of the ages in its manifoldness of loveliness and its charm of subtlety and subtlety of charm, it has maintained its spiritual appeal. Although

there are differences in form and variety between North Indian music and Carnatic music, yet they are at one in their beauty and spirituality as also in their stress on grace-notes and on subtle variations of musical form (*saṅgātis*).

In the Vedic period musical sounds were described as *hrasva* (short), *dīrgha* (long) and *pluta* (intermediate); *anudātta* (low pitch), *udātta* (high pitch) and *svarita* (medium pitch). The *Sāma-veda* registers a further advance and mentions three musical scales. Vidyāraṇya says that women also can accompany *Sāma-gāna*. Eventually the scale of seven notes came in. The *Vārāha Upaniṣad*²³ refers to *saṅgīta*, *tāla* and *laya*. The artists fused them with the voice *sthāyi* (registers) namely, *anudātta* or *mandra* and *udātta* or *tāra*. Even in the Rgvedic²⁴ times, percussion, wind and string instruments were known. The *Rk-prātiśākhya*²⁵ refers to three octaves and seven notes. The *Yajur-veda*²⁶ refers to *vīṇa*, *veṇu*, etc.

Music had a further evolution in the epic age. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* we hear about the *pramāṇas* (tempos), *vilamba* (slow), *madhyama* (medium) and *druta* (fast); seven *jātis*, *tantrī*, *laya*, *rasa*, etc. It refers in the *Bāla-kāṇḍa*,²⁷ to *gāndharva-tattva* (the science of music), *mūrchanā*, *sthāna*, *svara*, *gīta*, *mādhurya*, *gāna*, *gāyaka*, *geya* and so on. In the *Uttara-kāṇḍa*,²⁸ where Vālmiki takes, to Ayodhyā, Kuśa and Lava to whom he had taught the *Rāmāyaṇa*, we hear about *tantrī*, *laya*, *gīta*, *nṛtya*, *tāla*, etc. It is said that the boys Kuśa and Lava sang, to the accompaniment of instruments, twenty cantos of the poem every day. Later on in the epic age, the *Mahābhārata*²⁹ refers to the seven *svaras* and the *gāndhāra-grāma*. The experts in musical theory and practice rose to the concept of *grāmas* (*śadja-grāma* with the basic note *sa*; *saṛṣabha-grāma* with the basic note *ri*, etc.), which correspond to the *jātis* stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* gives us the history of the divine saint and singer (*devarṣi*) whose music exalted his devotion and whose devotion exalted his music, and who sweetens and gladdens the human life full of pain and grief.

23. VU. II. 82.

24. RV. VI. 47, 29 & 30.

25. RP. XIII. 42, 44, 46.

26. TA. I. 11.

27. VR. Bāla-kāṇḍa IV-10.

28. *ibid.* Uttara-kāṇḍa Canto 94.

29. MBH. *Sabhā* IV. 44-45.

अहो देवर्षिर्न्योऽयं यः कीर्तिं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः ।
गायन् माद्यन्निदं तन्त्र्या रमयत्यातुरं जगत् ॥ (I. 6. 39)

Hanumān was a great singer of the glory of God: So was Nandikeśvara and Kāśyapa. The latter is referred to in the *Hṛdayaṅgamā*³⁰ a commentary on Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*.

The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*³¹ refers to seven *jātis* and seven *jāti*s. The *Vāyu Purāṇa*³² refers to *śaḍja*, *madhyama* and *gāndhāra grāmas*, and forty-nine *mūrchanās*. Other *Purāṇas* and *Āgamas* also contain similar references. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* refers to seven *svaras*, three *grāmas*, twenty-one *mūrchanās* and forty-nine *tānas*. The *Viṣṇu-dharmottara*³³ refers to *gīta* (vocal music) and *vādyā* (instrumental music). Its third part contains an elaborate treatise on poetics, drama-turgy, music and dance. It refers to *svaras*, three *grāmas*, *rāgas*, nine *rasas* and *svaras* for each *rasa*, three *layas*, ten *jātis*, *vādī*, *saṁvādī*, and *anuvādī*, and *ātodya*.

Later yet Bharata, the great master of the science and art of music, dance and drama, gives an elaborate exposition of them. He discusses what *rasas* are evoked by particular notes. He refers to *śaḍja* and *madhyama jāti*s (*grāmas*) each with twenty-two notes and also to *svara*, *śruti* and *mūrchanā*. Chapters 28 to 37 of his *Nāṭya-śāstra* contains a systematic exposition of music.

Indian music had further and higher evolution in the period of Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* and *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* and of Śārṅga-deva's *Sanḡita-ratnākara*. While earlier works deal with music, drama and dance together, later works deal with them separately. In the *Sanḡita-ratnākara*, *rāga* system is evolved and there is a reference to thirty-five *rāgas*. Later yet, we see the concept of *janaka-rāgas* (parental tunes) and *upa-rāgas* (minor derivative tunes). Then came the *rāga-rāgini-parivāra* scheme (masculine tunes, feminine tunes and off-spring derivative tunes). The Hindustani music is based on this differentiation and classification. Professor P. Sambamoorthi points out that the terms Hindustani music and Carnatic music occur for the first time in Haripāla's *Sanḡita-sudhākara* (14th century A.D.). Then Rāmā-mātya brought, in his *Svara-mela-kalānidhi*, twenty *rāgas* into

30. *Hṛdayaṅgamā* on KD. I. 2.

31. MP. 23-51.

32. VP, Ch. 86. 36 to 69.

33. VD. III. Ch. 18 & 20.

twenty-nine main scales (*melas*). Some time later in the period of Veṅkaṭākhin's *Catur-daṇḍi-prakāśikā*, we find a richer evolution based on the *śruti* of twenty-two notes and twenty-seven *melakartas* (basic tunes) and the *janya-rāgas* (derivative tunes). The Carnatic system of music is based on this scheme. Innumerable expounders of the theory and art of music continued this tradition and several royal patrons encouraged them.

The modern Indian languages show a high excellence in music and in the interlinkedness of music and devotion. The ancient Tamil classic *Pari-pāḍal*³⁴ refers to seven *pālais* (musical modes). The great Tamil epic *Śilappadikāram*³⁵ is a rich mine of ideas in regard to Indian music and resembles Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*. The *Yāzh* was the most famous of Tamil musical instruments. It was similar to the harp and looked like a drawn bow (*jiyā*). It was of four varieties, namely, the *Peri-yāzh* with twenty-one strings, the *Makura-yāzh* with seventeen strings, the *Śakaṭa-yāzh* with sixteen strings and the *Seṅgoṭṭu-yāzh* with seven strings. The so-called *yāzh* with 1,000 strings was probably legendary. The *Akanānūru*³⁶ of the *Sangam* age refers to an elephant which came to destroy the crops but stood entranced by the song in *Kuruñji-pan* by a girl who was watching the crops. The *Perum-kathai*³⁷ says that Udayanan's *yāzh*-music fascinated an elephant. The *Śilappadikāram* refers to *yāzh*, *viṇā*, flute and drum. It refers also to the seven notes of the octave and various *rāgas* called *paṇs* such as *Kolli*, *Kuruñji*, *Tekkeṣi*, etc. The *Tevāram* and *Prabandham* songs were composed by the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava mystical saints and singers in the old *paṇs* which are now given Sanskrit names. The Tamil Jain lexicon *Divākaram*³⁸ refers to twenty-two *śrutis* and two kinds of tunes, namely, those containing all the seven notes (*paṇs*) and those containing less and to twenty-nine *paṇs* (*rāgas*). There are also Tamil folksong types such as *Cindu*, *Kummi*, *Temmaṅgu*, etc.

In Kerala, we find such names as *Indira*, *Indālam*, *Pāḍi*, *Puranāra*, etc. We find there the *sopāna* style of singing in which a slow and majestic style of songs is found fitted for the expression of the sentiment of devotion. In the Andhra, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gurjara,

34. PP. p. 54.

35. SA. Araṅgetrukkāthai 12 to 25.

36. AN. 102.

37. PK. II-9-57 to 59.

38. D. p. 240.

Punjabi, Bengali and Orissa styles of music, we find special peculiarities and excellences. In all the modern Indian languages, we find a preponderance of devotional songs.

Vocal music naturally preceded instrumental music. We have in India a wonderful variety of musical instruments. The Vedas refer to such instruments of percussion, as *dundubhi*, *bhūmidundubhi*, *audumbara*, *vanaspati* and *āgehati*, stringed instruments like *karkari* and *vāna* (a lute which is said to have 100 strings), and wind instruments like *tunava* and *nādi*. The *Rg-veda* refers to *mṛdaṅga*, *vīṇā*, *vamśi*, *damaru*, etc. The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* refer to *bheri*, *dundubhi*, *mṛdaṅga*, *ḍiṇḍima*, *saṅkha*, *ānaka*, *gomukha*, etc. Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* refers to *tata* (stringed instruments), *avanaddha* (percussion instruments) like the drum, etc., *ghana* like the cymbals, and *susira* (wind instruments). He says that vocal music (*gīta*) should go together and whirl like a lighted torch (*alātacakra*) and that *saṅgīta* means such a combination. His opinion is that since the voice of women is naturally sweeter than that of men, women should take to vocal music and men to instrumental music.

In future India, there will be no royal patrons of the fine arts. India has achieved independence and has become a Republic. The fine arts will hereafter be thrown especially on public patronage and also on State patronage. The music *sabhās* all-round all over the country will channel the patronage of the public. The Central Union Government in India has established the Sahitya Academy, Sangita Nataka Academy and Lalita Kala Academy at the all-India level. Each State has got also its *Saṅgīta-nāṭaka-saṅgham*. All these institutions and their functionaries and the public must bring about a continuous progress in our fine arts. We must preserve the graces and glories of our fine arts unimpaired and make them rise to new heights of achievement. We must preserve and augment their spiritual appeal. We are specially proud of our wonderful music which is full of,

“Soft Indian airs carried to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton need and giddy cunning
The melting voice through mazes running
Unwinding all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony”;

and which can,

“Dissolve us into ecstasies
And bring all Heaven before our eyes”.

INDIAN DANCE

Lecture III

THE ESSENCE OF INDIAN DANCE

All over the world we have crude folk-dance as well as classical and romantic forms of dance. We have them in India also. We find the figures of dancing women in the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro. The subtleties of human emotion cannot be interpreted adequately by the folk arts, but can be done only by the classical arts. *Bharata-nāṭya* excels in footwork and symbolic gestures and movements of other parts of the human body, especially of face and eyes, which interpret, convey and enkindle emotion. In ballet dances, we find intricate and attractive physical rhythms but not æsthetic and spiritual themes and emotions. Western dances appeal to the senses, whereas Indian dances appeal mainly to the spirit. The Indian artists and æstheticians realized the inter-blending of æsthetic emotional expressions, musical improvisations, rhythmic time-measures and spiritual experiences as the soul of the arts of music and dance. Bharata says in his *Nāṭya-śāstra* :

एवं गीतं च वाद्यं च नाट्यं च विविधाश्रयम् ।

अलातचक्रप्रतिमं कर्तव्यं नाट्यवेदिभिः ॥ (XXVIII. 7)

(Thus vocal and instrumental music and diversified dance should be made by the dance-exhibitors to whirl round like a lightened torch.) Vocal music, instrumental music and dance in harmonious combination is called *saṅgīta* :

गीतं वाद्यं तथा नृत्यं त्रयं संगीतमुच्यते । (SR, I. 21)

Among the demigods and demigoddesses, the *gandharvas* are the supreme singers and the *apsaras* maidens are the supreme dancers. Among the divine sages, Nārada and Tumburu are the supreme vocalists and instrumentalists. Kings and princes learnt especially poesy and music and were patrons of all the arts. There is a legend that the king Vikramāditya was invited by Indra to heaven to divide a moot question of art between Rambhā and Urvaśī and that he gave his decision in favour of the latter's view. The traditional sixty-four arts (*catuh-śaṣṭi kalās*) comprise of all the arts including industrial as well as the fine arts. We must take it that the number sixty-four is illustrative and not

exhaustive, because as civilization advances, new fine arts, new industrial arts and new instruments of artistic expression will be, and are being added, while some of the older forms and instruments have fallen into disuse.

It is often said that the word *bharata* means *bha+ra+ta* which stand for *bhāva* (emotion), *rāga* (tune) and *tāla* (time-measure).

भकारो भाव इत्युक्तः रकारो राग उच्यते ।

तकारो तालसंज्ञश्च इत्येवं भरतं विदुः ॥

This idea is found also in the ancient Tamil work on dance *Bharata-senā-patīyam*. It may be that this was only an ingenious way of analysing and explaining the syllables constituting the name *bharata*, just as in the *Śākuntala* the name of Bharata, Śakuntalā's son, is derived by Kālidāsa from *bharana* (protection)

भरत इति लोकस्य भरणात्

(VII. 33)

The above idea has gained currency in Tamil Nad also. Vedānta Deśika refers to it in his drama *Sanikalpa-sūryodaya* and in his *Hastigiri-māhātmyam*. In the latter, it is said.

மனஸ்ஸிலே பாவமும், வாக்கிலே ராகமும், கரத்திலே தாளமும் பாவ ராக தாளங்களை வகுத்த பரத சாஸ்திரத்தின் படியே பண்ணும் இசையும் திகழப் பார்க்கின்றோம்.

The *Tiruvilaiyādal-purāṇam* states the same idea.

பாவமோடு ராக தாள மிம்முன்றும்
பகர்ந்திடும் முறையினர் பரதம்

It is thus clear that from very early times, the Indian artists realized the inter-fusion of æsthetic and emotional expressions, musical improvisations and rhythmic time-measures as the soul of the art of dance.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF INDIAN DANCE

The fine arts in India were inspired by religion and had their origin in the *Vedas*. This fact is expressly stated in Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* and Nandikeśvara's *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that he is the *Sāma-veda* among the *Vedas*. The *Sāma-veda* is the scripture in which the musical element of chanting is the all-important and pivotal aspect. *Gāndharva-veda* including the *Nāṭya-veda* is one of the four *Upa-vedas* (subsidiary *Vedas*). Bharata says in his *Nāṭya-śāstra* that God Brahmā took the dialogue-element

from the *Rg-veda*, gesture-element from the *Yajur-veda*, music-element from the *Sāma-veda* and the emotional element (*rasa*) from *Atharva-veda*, fused them to create the art of *nāṭya* as the fifth *Veda* and taught it to Bharata and his one hundred sons. *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* of Nandikeśvara contains a similar description. This is the reason why the art of dance is called *Nāṭya-veda*.

The ancient dances and dramas took Vedic and Purāṇic stories and dialogues as their themes. Many of these are full of vital, æsthetic, moral and spiritual ideas and ideals. Even today such themes as the story of Indra and the Devas in the *Kena Upaniṣad*, the story of Naciketas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, the story of Jānaśruti and Raikva, of Śvetaketu, of Brahmā, Virocana and Indra in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the stories of Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the innumerable stories in our epics and *Purāṇas*, the later stories in our poems and plays, etc., form a rich storehouse of themes for dances and dramas.

Gestures, music and emotion (*rasa*) are the vital elements in dance and the dialogues in the drama.

Art and Religion form the highest peaks of the nation's life. Sociology, economics and politics are no doubt summits of its outer life. But while the sub-human creation is content with the outer life and especially the imperious urges of food and sex, man has a still more imperious urge to go within and beyond and explore the realms of the unseen and the unheard. This basic human urge was felt and expressed earliest by the human personality in India. The *Rg-veda* refers to singers and dancers. In the Indian pantheon, gods and goddesses are described as devoted to one or other of the fine arts. Goddess Sarasvatī is the divinity of poetry and music and shows by her holding the book, the *vīṇā* and the rosary in hands that knowledge, art and devotion form a unity in trinity and trinity in unity. God Śiva as Naṭarāja (king of dancers) and Goddess Umā are the divinities of dance. God Dakṣiṇāmūrti (an aspect of God Śiva) and Goddess Śyāmalā (an aspect of Goddess Umā) play on the *vīṇā*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the god of the music of the flute and of *rāsālilā* (congregational dance). Śrī Rāma is described in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* as a supreme expert in and exponent of the art of music.

The dance classics and dance traditions of India have had a course of their own in accordance with the genius of Indian culture. In other countries, the art of dance has been developed in accordance

with the genius of the cultures and comeliness of person and smoothness and rhythm of the movements of his body were prized highly. In modern Ballet dance in the West, we find many new and intricate physical rhythms. But such dances are wanting in æsthetic themes and emotions and are disassociated from religion. Mr. Arnold Haskell says well: "The difference between dance and acrobatics lies not so much in technique as in a state of mind". It is in India that dance has been elevated to the level of emotional self-expression and the status of a spiritual art. We find the figure of dancing women in the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro. In the *Rg-veda*,³⁹ *Uṣas* (the Goddess of Dawn) is described as being clad in a gay garment like a dancer. The dances of Śiva, Kālī, Kṛṣṇa, Gaṇeśa and the celestial Apsaras maidens are described in Indian literature. I have already shown how Bharata describes the propriety of a prayerful attitude while constructing the dance-hall and while dancing there. In Indian temples, *nṛtta* and *nāṭya* are a portion of the elaborate ritual worship. It is no doubt true that as the worship was public, *devadāsīs* were given the role of dancing in worship. But in the *pūjā* rooms in houses and places, family women offered *nṛtta* as a ritual or as a pastime as in the case of Jayadeva's wife Padmāvatī and queen Mīrā Bai of Rajasthan who danced during worship and princess Uttarā and Mālavikā who danced to show the mastery of the art.

MAIN WORKS ON NĀṬYA

Having explained already the true inwardness of Western and Indian Art in general, it will be an easy transition to probe and explain the true inwardness of the Indian art of dance in the light of the classical treatises on the subject.

I, therefore, now propose to dwell in some detail on three great masterpieces in the realm of æsthetics which are also the three supreme authorities about *Bharata-nāṭyam* namely Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*, Nandikeśvara's *Bharatārṇava* and *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*. The oldest Indian work, nay, the oldest work in the world on the subject, is Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* as stated already. It deals not only with dancing but also with music, poetics, drama, acting and stage craft. It consists of thirty-six chapters and 6,000 verses. Bharata is referred to with great respect as *Bharata Muni* by Kālidāsa in his famous play *Vikramorvaśīya*.

39. RV. III.61-1

मुनिनां भरतेन यः प्रयोगो
भवतीष्वष्टरसाश्रयः प्रयुक्तः ।

(II. 18)

Abhinavagupta's commentary on it is a luminous exposition. He calls the work as *Bharata-sūtras* and the author as *sūtrakāra*.

In Bharata's work there occurs a famous story about the art of *nāṭya* or dance. God Indra and other gods, who had been entrusted by the creator with various cosmic functions, told him that they desired the joys of the much needed spirit of creative play in the realms of vision and audition.

क्रीडनीयकमिच्छामो दृश्यं श्रव्यं च यद् भवेत् । (NS, I. 11)

Thereupon the creator created the art of dance as comprising the essence of all the scriptures and as embodying all the fine arts.

सर्वशास्त्रार्थसम्पन्नं सर्वविद्याप्रवर्तकम् ।

नाट्याख्यं पञ्चमं वेदम् ॥

(ibid, I. 15)

Bharata says that Brahmā taught him *nāṭya* with the following objectives in his view.

Art is not merely a pastime (*vinoda*), but should illumine the aims of life, should be a source of instruction and illumination, should soften the ills and griefs of life, should intensify the pleasures and joys of life, should exhibit the panorama of life, should teach what is auspicious for human life, should be a refuge from the storms and miseries of existence and should point the way to the highest life. (NS, I. 75-86.)

The second chapter of the *Nāṭya-śāstra* deals with the shapes of the theatre or *prekṣā-grha*, (square, rectangular and triangular) including the green room, the stage and the auditorium. Chapter III deals with the *raṅgapūjā* or the ceremonial worship at the time of laying the foundation for the theatre and at the time of opening it. Chapter IV describes 108 *karaṇas* (poses) in *nāṭya* and thirty-two *aṅgahāras* (combinations of two or more *karaṇas*) and four *recakas* (physical movements of feet, lips, hands and neck). The 108 *karaṇas* are sculptured in the eastern and western *gopurams* of the temple of Naṭarāja at Chidambaram with appropriate verses from Bharata's work (verses 26 to 263).

Chapter V deals with the preliminaries such as music, etc., preceding dance and drama. Chapters VI and VII deal with the most important subject of *nāṭya*, *bhāvas* and *rasas*. I shall deal with these

presently. Bharata mentions only eight *rāsas* and does not admit *śānta* as *rasa*. But at the end of his commentary on Chapter VI, Abhinavagupta accepts it as a *rasa*. Chapters VIII to XIV deal with *āṅgikābhinaya* (physical gestures). Chapter VIII deals with the movements of eyes, eye-brows, nose, lips and neck. Chapter IX deals with finger-poses (*hastābhinaya*). Chapter X deals with the body movements (*śarīrābhinaya*), including breasts, sides, hips, thighs and legs. Chapter XI to XIV deal with *cārīs* (movements with one foot), *karāṇas* (movements with both feet), *khaṇḍas* or combinations of *karāṇas* and *maṇḍalas* or combinations of *khaṇḍas*, etc. Chapters XV to XXII proceed to deal with *vākyābhinaya* (expression of emotion by words). Chapters XV and XVI deal with poetic metres, etc. Chapter XVII deals with *alaṅkāras* or figures of speech and with beauties (*guṇas*) and faults (*doṣas*) of style. Chapter XVIII deals with all-India Sanskrit language and the regional languages. Chapter XIX describes the musical notes (*svaras*) and states what *svaras* manifest particular *rāsas* (verses 38 and 39). Other connected topics are also dealt with. Chapters XX and XXI deal with the details of dramaturgy, Chapter XXII with style (*vytti*), the next chapter with *āhāryābhinaya* (costume and decoration) and chapter XXIV with *sāttvikābhinaya* (natural physical manifestations in men and women under the stress of dominant emotions). The latter deals also with the eight manifestations due to the pressure of *kāma* or love emotion and the eight types of heroine (*aṣṭa-nāyikās*). The next chapter classifies the lovers of both sexes, and the messengers of love (*dūtīs*), etc. Chapter XXVI deals with miscellaneous *abhinayas*, like those descriptive of the seasons, the infinite and infinitely diverse human emotions, etc. The theme for the next chapter is the verbal and physical expressions of emotions (*siddhis*). Chapters XXVIII to XXXIII deal with the vocal and instrumental music, time-measures, etc. Chapter XXXIV describes types of men and women, etc., while the next one describes the varieties of dramatic characters. Chapter XXXVI sums up the lineage and the glory of the art and says that the art will purify and intensify the mind since it contains the essence of all the *śāstras*, it will also destroy sin and make us virtuous (NS, XXXVI, 7, 8).

Nandikeśvara's *Bharatārṇava*

The *Bharatārṇava*, attributed to Nandikeśvara and edited by the well-known scholar Sri K. Vasudeva Sastri, has been recently

published by the Saraswati Mahal Library, of Tanjore. The original treatise is said to consist of 4,000 verses but this edition contains only 1,200 verses. Some scholars hold that the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* is an abridgement of the *Bharatārṇava*, while others regard it as an independent work. It is no doubt true that in the classification of *hastas*, *padābheda*s and *sthānakas*, the *Bharatārṇava* is more elaborate than the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* and has much in common with Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*. But we cannot infer much from that fact. It may be that after composing the big standard work *Bharatārṇava* and dealing with the entire ambit of aesthetics, the author wrote a small hand-book or simplified manual by way of abridgement of the bigger work, to expound *abhinaya*. In the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*, there is a story that Indra became jealous of the *daitya* dancer Nāṭanaśekhara and asked Nandikeśvara's help and that Nandikeśvara gave him an abridgment of *Bharatārṇava* in the form of the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*. The very name *Bharatārṇava* shows that its author must have been posterior to Bharata Muni, the author of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. Kālidāsa refers to Bharata as has been already mentioned, but does not refer to Nandikeśvara's work as anterior to his time and attributed to the God Nandikeśvara who was an attendant on God Śiva, the deity of Kālidāsa's devotion and worship. Thus the *Bharatārṇava* and *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* of Nandikeśvara are post-Kālidāsa works. It is also noteworthy that in the enumeration of the ten *avatāras* (incarnations) of God Viṣṇu, the name of the Buddha is not found in the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*. Some *Purāṇas* (*Matsya* and *Bhāgavata*) include him, while Jayadeva's *Gīta-govinda* places him between Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin. We may thus assign Nandikeśvara to the third century A.D. It may be that the name Nandikeśvara is an assumed name as *Nandin* is the inseparable attendant and follower of God Śiva as Nāṭarāja, who is the supreme presiding deity of the Art of Dance.

While Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* says that *nṛtta* or pure dance is not related to the exposition of *rasa*, but is only an embellishment of the *nāṭya*, the *Bharatārṇava* relates it to *rasa*. Bharata's work refers to 108 *karāṇas* and their combinations known as *aṅgahāras*, each *aṅgahāra* being only a portion of a dance sequence. But the *Bharatārṇava* says that each *aṅgahāra*, while being a blend of *karāṇas*, is a complete item of dance and evokes a particular *rasa*.

In the *Bharatārṇava*, Chapters I to IV deal with hand gestures and movements of the head, eyes and feet. Chapters I to III refer to twenty-seven *asaṁyuta* (single-hand) gestures, sixteen *saṁyuta*

(double hands) gestures, 226 *nṛtta-hastas* (gestures for use in pure dance). In regard to the *asamyuta* gestures, this work and the *Abhinaya-darpana* agree substantially, the latter work referring to twenty-eight *asamyuta* gestures. In regard to the *samyuta* gestures, the *Abhinaya-darpana* refers to twenty-three while the *Bharatārṇava* refers to only sixteen. Of these, only seven have common names and only six have identical description. In regard to *nṛtta-hastas*, the *Abhinaya-darpana* classifies them into five kinds, namely, upwards, downwards, to the right, to the left and in front, and refers to the correlation between finger-gesture and footwork, while the classification in the *Bharatārṇava* is different.

Chapter IV deals with movements of the head, the eyes (*dr̥ṣṭis*) and the feet. *Bharatārṇava* refers to nineteen movements of the head, whereas *Abhinaya-darpana* refers only to nine movements. The former work mentions thirty-six movements of the eyes, namely, eight movements relating to the eight *rasas*, eight relating to the eight *sthāyi-bhāvas*, and twenty relating to the *vyabhicāri-bhāvas*. Movements of the feet are classified as five, seven and twenty-two.

Chapters V and VI deal with thirty-one *sthānakas* or standing poses, namely, six masculine, seven feminine and eighteen common poses. *Bharata* refers to six masculine and three feminine poses and does not mention common poses. The *Saṅgīta-ratnākara* refers to the standing poses as thirteen *mārga* and twenty-two *deśi* poses. Out of the thirteen *mārga* poses, six are masculine and seven feminine.

Chapter VII deals with 108 *tālas*. Thus the *śollukattus* in use in the *Bharata-nāṭya* in Tamil Nad have an ancient origin. Chapter VIII deals with *cārīs* or movements of limbs below the hip. It refers to nine *ākāśa-cārīs* and sixteen *bhū-cārīs*, i.e., movements on the ground. *Bharata* refers to sixteen movements off the ground and sixteen on the ground. The *Saṅgīta-ratnākara* refers also to *deśi* (provincial or local) *cārīs*.

Chapters IX to XIV deal with various types of pure dance namely, *aṅgahāra* as a combination of eight, nine or ten *karaṇas*, each *karaṇa* being a combination of poses and movements of the hands, feet, head and eyes. The *karaṇas* are 108 in number. *Bharata* refers to thirty-two *aṅgahāras*. In the *Bharatārṇava*, an *aṅgahāra* is not a combination of *karaṇas* but is a type of dance, evocatory of a *rasa*. For *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, there is the *lalita-aṅgahāra*; for *vīra*, there is the *vikrama-aṅgahāra*;

for *karuṇa*, the *kāruṇika-aṅgahāra*; for *adbhuta*, the *viçitra-aṅgahāra*, and so on.

Chapters XI and XII deal with nine varieties of *śṛṅga-nāṭya*. A *śṛṅga-nāṭya* is a combination of two *cārīs* and two *sthānakas* with an *aṅgahāra*. Chapter XIII deals with *sapta-lāsyam*, the *tālas* appropriate to the five *tāṇḍava* varieties of *deśi-nāṭya* and their appropriate *gatis*, *karaṇas*, *cārīs*, *tālas*, etc. Of the seven dances, two are called *tāṇḍava* and were danced by *Śiva* and five are *lāsyas* danced by *Pārvatī*.

The *Bharatārṇava-saṅgraha* and *Ādi-bharata*, which deal with this topic, are available in the Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjore.

Nandikeśvara's *Abhinaya-darpana*

This well-known work consists of 324 verses. An edition of it was brought out by the famous scholar and aesthetician Ananda K. Coomaraswami in 1917. He published a second edition in 1956. Manmohan Ghosh's edition appeared in 1957. In the introduction to his edition, Mr. Ghosh seems to hold the view that the word *prekṣā* as used by Kautilya (4th century B.C.) and the words *dṛṣya-kāvya*, *rūpaka* and *nāṭaka* show that the Hindu plays were danced, and that in them rhythm and lyrical elements preponderate and there is little of realism or action. It seems to me that this is a fanciful view as the root *naṭ* implies pantomime or mimicking or mimesis as well as dancing and the word *naṭa* means both an actor and a dancer. The plays of Bhāsa, Kālidāsa, Śūdraka, Bhavabhūti and other great dramatists contain dynamic dramatic action and do not contain any stage-directions about dancing except when danseuses like Mālavikā give dance performances. A play, like a dance recital, evokes *rasa* but their modes and techniques are as the poles apart. The expression *naṭa-sūtras* is found in Pāṇini (IV, 3, 110). They are ascribed to Śilālin and Kṛṣṇaśva. Pāṇini belonged to the sixth century B. C. Bhāsa's plays (3rd century B.C.) refer to words like *cārī*. In Hāla's *Saptatātī*; we find the words *naṭa* and *pūrva-raṅga*. The word *naṭacārya* occurs in the *Avadāna-śataka* of 3rd century B.C. The word *abhinaya* means to bring near, i.e., bring a situation near to the mind of the spectators. This may be by action in the case of the actor or by dance in the case of a dancer. The word is found frequently in the *Harivaṃśa* (3rd or 2nd century B.C.). In dance, *āṅgika*, *vācika*, *āhārya* and *sāttvika* elements are needed. But they are needed also in dramas in other forms for bringing out intensities of feeling, and these must go with action and speech quite apart from dance. It is thus clear that the

Hindu mind attained a clear, well-defined and well-demarcated differentiation as between religion and art, and as among poetry, drama, music and dance. The *mudrās* in Tāntric rituals involve symbolic gestures in their own way. Even in dance, it is differentiated as between rhythmic footwork cum movements of the upper livelier limbs (*nṛtta*) dance embellished by gesture interpretative of emotion (*nṛtya*) cum *abhinaya*, and dance of which the interpretation of evolution is the soul and which is embellished by rhythmic movements and gestures cum *abhinaya*.

अन्यद् भावाश्रयं नृत्यं नृत्तं ताललयाश्रयम् । (DR, I. 9)

The essence of the originality of the Hindu mind consists in its very early realization, 2000 years ago, that *abhinaya* in its four-fold forms is diverse but one, and that all these aspects are branches stemming from the trunk of *bhāva-rasa-dhvani*, which is fed by the root of *ānanda* (joy in creation and creativeness). The Hindu mind realized also that *gīta* (vocal music) and *vādyā* (instrumental music), especially the music of *vīṇā*, *veṇu* and *mṛdaṅga*, and *nṛtya* (dance) are inseparable and are a unity in trinity and trinity in unity. In combination, they are called *saṅgīta* or *tauryatrika*. The affinities of poetry, music and dance as also the affinities of *nāṭya* (dance), *nāṭya-nāṭaka* (dance-drama) and *nāṭaka* or *rūpaka* (pure drama) are also realized. In spite of the differentiation between the ritual, folk and classical dances, there exist the basic inward elective affinities among them. Thus *abhinaya* (bodily movements and finger gestures) go with *gīta*, *nṛtya* and *nāṭaka* in diverse ways, and the outlines of each should not be blended with and blurred by the outlines of others. In poetry, the words expressing emotion by suggestion predominate, in music, the tune and in dance, the footwork cum *abhinaya*. In drama, the words, their emotional expression as well as looks and gestures relieved of the domination of rhythm, are equally important. India evolved also the unique art forms of Purāṇic recitation, *harikathā* and *goṣṭhī-bhajana* (congregational devotional music) in which words and emotional expositions, music, gesture and dance are interblended in different proportions and with differentiated emphasis.

It is with such a background that we must approach, study and evaluate *Abhinaya-darpana* which treats of *āṅgikābhinaya*, i.e. footwork, poses, looks and gestures, etc. These gestures and poses (*abhinaya* and *mudrā*) arose naturally but became surcharged with symbolism.

The *Abhinaya-darpana* treats of various kinds of gestures and footwork, after treating about the divine origin and significance of dance. It says that Śiva, Śambhu, Gaurī, Brahmā, Mādhava, Nandikeśvara, Dattila, Kohala, Yājñavalkya, Nārada, Hanūmān, Vighnarāja, Subrahmanya, Brhaspati, Rāvaṇa, Arjuna and Uṣā taught *nāṭya* to others. Brahmā taught the *Nāṭya-veda* to Bharata who performed *nṛtta*, *nṛtya* and *nāṭya* with the aid of *Gandharvas* (celestial singers) and *Apsarasas* (celestial dancing maids) before God Śiva. Śiva had Bharata trained in *Tāṇḍava* by Taṇḍu the chief of his *bhūtas* or *ganas* and in *lāsya* by his spouse Pārvatī who had taught it to Bāṇāsura's daughter Uṣā. The latter in her turn taught it to the *gopīs* (milk-maids) of Dvārakā. The ladies of Saurashtra got this from them and taught it to the women of other countries. The *nāṭya* can give us all the *puruṣārthas* or aims of life (*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*), fame and majesty, auspiciousness, learning and skill; bestow on us benevolence, steadfastness, courage and æsthetic joy, remove sorrow, affliction, misery, depression and despondency. It can give a bliss higher than the divine (*brahmānanda*). Else, how could it fascinate the minds and hearts of persons like Nārada?

कीर्तिप्रागल्भ्यसोभाग्यवैदग्ध्यानां प्रवर्धनम् ।

औदार्यस्थैर्यधैर्याणां विलासस्य च कारणम् ॥

दुःखातिशोकनिर्वेदखेदविच्छेदकारणम् ।

अपि ब्रह्मपरानन्दादिदमभ्यधिकं मतम् ।

जहार नारदादीनां चित्तानि कथमन्यथा ॥ (AD, 9-11)

Nandikeśvara clearly demarcates *nṛtta*, *nṛtya*, *nāṭya* and *nāṭaka* as stated above.

नाट्यं तन्नाटकं चैव पूज्यं पूर्वकथायुतम् ।

भावाभिनयहीनं तु नृत्तमित्यभिधीयते ।

रसभावव्यञ्जनादियुक्तं नृत्यमितीर्यते ॥ (AD, 15-16)

(*Nāṭya* and *nāṭaka* have a traditional story as the theme, *nṛtta* has no *bhāva* or *abhinaya*. *Nṛtya* expresses *rasa* and *bhāva*.)

The work describes also the traits of the person who presides (*sabhāpati*), his adviser (*mantrin*) and the audience, (AD, 19), the *raṅga* (dance auditorium), the danseuse having two men with cymbals (*tālas*) on the right and two men with drums (*mṛdaṅgas*) on the left, and a singer between the latter, the *śrutikāra* (drone) being close by. Such

should be the *pūrvāṅga*. The danseuse should then perform *ṛtā* and singing accompanied by *abhinaya* full of *bhāva* and *tāla* (rhythmic time-measure).

एवं कृत्वा पूर्वरङ्गं नृत्यं कार्यं ततः परम् ।
नृत्यं गीताभिनयनं भावतालयुतं भवेत् ॥

(*ibid.* 35)

The *abhinaya* consists of *āṅgika* (by limbs), *vācika* (by speech, e.g., poetry and drama, etc.), *āhārya* (costume and jewels), and *sāttvika* (i.e., performed by *sāttvika-bhāvas* (emotions) as experienced and represented by the knowers of *bhāvas*). (*ibid.* AD, 39, 40)

The work then describes in detail *āṅgika-abhinaya*, i.e., the movements of *āṅgas*, *pratyāṅgas* and *upāṅgas*.

Āṅgas : Head, hands, chest, sides (flanks), hip and feet. Some include the neck also.

Pratyāṅgas : Shoulders, arms, back, belly, thighs and legs. Some add wrists, elbows, knees and neck.

Upāṅgas : Eyes, eyebrows, eyeballs, cheeks, nose, jaw, lips, teeth, tongue, chin and face. Some add shoulders. There are also heels, ankles, toes and fingers.

The dynamism of dance depends on the movements of *āṅgas*, *pratyāṅgas* and *upāṅgas*.

अङ्गानां चलनादेव प्रत्यङ्गोपाङ्गयोरपि ।
चलनं प्रभवेत्

(AD, 48-49)

The work describes the following kinds of gesture :

- (1) Nine gestures of the head ;
- (2) eight glances of the eyes and six movements of the eyebrows ;
- (3) four gestures of the neck ;
- (4) twenty-eight gestures by one hand (*asaṁyuta*) and four more ;
- (5) twenty-three gestures by both hands (*saṁyuta*) ;
- (6) gestures to indicate gods ;
- (7) gestures to indicate the ten incarnations of God Viṣṇu ;
- (8) gestures to indicate the castes ;
- (9) gestures to indicate the various relations (father, mother and others).

(10) thirteen *ṛtā-hastas*, and

(11) gestures to indicate the nine *grāhas* (planets).

For all these, *vinīyogas* (occasions and applications) are also described.

The work then deals with the various poses, postures, gaits, etc., depending on the feet.

- (1) ten *maṇḍalas* or standing postures ;
- (2) six *sthānakas* or resting postures ;
- (3) five *utplavanas* or leaping movements ;
- (4) seven *bhramarīs* or circular movements and
- (5) eighteen kinds of *cārīs* and *gatis* (gaits).

The work says also that *maṇḍalas*, *utplavanas*, *bhramarīs*, *cārīs* and *gatis* are innumerable and diverse (verses 322 to 324). They have to be learnt from competent teacher. The *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* does not refer to the word *karāṇa*. It is a very clear, concise and valuable work on the art of dance.

Saṅgīta-ratnākara of Śārṅgadeva is a valuable treatise not only on music but also on dance. Being much later than the works of Bharata and Nandikeśvara, it is more detailed and elaborate. It gives an elaborate description of *lāsyaṅgas* and of the movements of the head, eyes, eyelids and eyeballs, of the lips, fingers and the *ṛtā-hastas*. I may also refer to Haripāla Deva's *Saṅgīta-sudhākara*. *Saṅgīta-makaranda* was written by Veda Sūri in 1640 A.D. for instructing Śambhu, the brother of Sivaji, in the art of dance. It describes in detail (1) *cārīs* (movements of the legs upto the hip), (2) *maṇḍalas* (combinations of *cārīs*), (3) *recakas* (movements of the feet, hip, hands and neck), (4) *hasta-karāṇas*, *karavartanas* and *cālakas*, (5) *karāṇas* (simultaneous movements of hands and legs) and (6) *āṅgahāras* (combinations of *karāṇas*). A *karāṇa* is a harmonious co-ordination of clearly defined movements of hands and feet. The *aḍavus* in use today in the *Bharata-nāṭya* in South India are but fragments of the innumerable *recākas*, *karāṇas*, etc., described in Bharata's *Nāṭya-sāstra*.

The *Rasamañjarī* is a manual giving instruction in regard to dance poses, gestures and movements and explaining the significance of the symbolism connected therewith. In works of the type, there are elaborate classifications of heroes (*nāyakas*) and heroines (*nāyikās*). These classifications are overdone and have but little emotional appeal in our days. Men are classified as *anukūla* (devoted husband), *dakṣiṇa*

(loving many women), *dhṛṣṭa* (roving lover often admonished) and *śaṭha* (treacherous libertine). The books refer also to *viṭas* (helpers in love) and *vidūṣakas* (jesters). The women are classified as *svīyā* (wife), *parakīyā* (unmarried or another's wife) and *sāmānyā* (courtesan). They are also classified as *mugdā* (young), *madhyā* (adolescent) and *pragalbā* (matron). The *parakīyā* is subdivided as *guptā* (concealing love affairs), *vidagdā* (clever and skillful), *lakṣitā* (reckless), *kulaṭā* (passionate and roving), *anūṣayanā* (fond of assignation) and *muditā* (full of recollected happiness). Women are further classified as *proṣita-bhartṛkā* (whose husband is abroad), *khaṇḍitā* (disregarded), *kalahāntarītā* (disdainful and then penitent), *vipralabdā* (missing her lover at the place of assignation), *utkā* (eager), *vāsakasajjā* (getting ready to meet the lover), *svādhīna-bhartṛkā* (with an affectionate and obedient husband) and *abhisārikā* (going to her lover's abode). A further classification is into *uttamā* (the best who returns good for evil), *madhyamā* (the middle who returns like for like), and *adhamā* (the worst who returns evil for good). The *sakhī* (feminine friend) helps the woman in love, just as the *viṭa*, etc., help the man in love.

LITERARY HISTORY OF INDIAN DANCE

In the *Rg-veda*⁴⁰ Goddess *Uṣas* (dawn) is described as clad in gay garments like a dancer. In *Rg-vedic* times, women practised music and dance. In the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* during the description of the royal entertainment provided by the sage Bharadvāja to Bharata and his army, there is a reference to Nārada, Tumburu and the Gandharvas as songsters and to various Apsarasas as dancers (*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* XCI. 45, 46). In the *Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa* Svayamprabhā refers to her dear friend Hemā as an expert in dance and music.

मम प्रियसखी हैमा नृत्यगीतविशारदा (LXVII. 17)

In the *Sundara-kāṇḍa* while describing Rāvaṇa's harem, the poet refers to women who were experts in dance and instrumental music. (X. 32).

In the later great epic *Mahābhārata*⁴¹ we are told how Arjuna learnt the art of dance from Citrasena and how during the *incognito* stay of the Pāṇḍavas in Virāṭa's kingdom, he as the eunuch Brahannalā

40. RV. III-61. 4.

41. MBH. Vana ch. 46.

taught the art to Uttarā, the daughter of the king. Subhadrā, the sister of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the queen of Arjuna, was the reputed expert in the art. Besides, Pāṇini's⁴² (500 B.C.) mention of the *Nāṭya-sūtras*, Patañjali⁴³ (140 B.C.) refers to the dramas *Kaṁsavadha* and *Bali-bandhana*.

Kālidāsa's poems and plays also show that Art has always been highly prized and praised in India. It has been called by him as divine food (nectar) of the soul and as the swift means of God-realization. In a well-known verse in the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, the supreme poet of India says: "The sages regard it as the feast for divine eyes; God Śiva has manifested two aspects of it (*lāsya* and *tāṇḍava* or graceful and vigorous aspects) in his form of feminine—masculine God-head (*Umā-Maheśvara* or *Ardhanārīśvara*); in it we see the entire pageant of universal life in its diverse and marvellous combinations of the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and it is the sole common source of joy to persons of diverse and contradictory tendencies and temperaments". (I, 4).

In Kālidāsa's heroines, Mālavikā was a royal dancer, Urvaśī was a heavenly dancer, and Śakuntalā was the daughter of a dancer. In his poem *Kumāra-sambhava* (XI. 36), he refers to the graceful dancing accompanying music and full of *bhāva* and *rasa*, by the Apsarasas. He also refers to the vigorous dancers of Bhṛṅgi and Kālī (IX, 48, 49). The ritual dances in God Śiva's temple in Ujjain are also mentioned. (*Megha-dūta*, I, 34.) *Amarakoṣa* refers to *āṅgika* and *sāttvika abhinaya*. The classical works on *nāṭya*, besides the works I have discussed above, are Dhanañjaya's *Daśa-rūpaka*, Śārṅgadeva's *Saṅgita-ratnākara*, *Saṅgita-sārāmṛta* by Tulajaji (Maharaja of Tanjore), and *Bālarāma-bharata* by Bālarāma Varman (Maharaja of Travancore). *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* (about 5th century A.D.) and *Agni-purāṇa* also give very important expositions of *abhinaya*.

In the later centuries, we have many (said to be 4,500) *padams* (erotic songs) of Kṣetrajña; the *pada varṇas* of Yuvaraṅga, Parimalaraṅga, Śārāṅgapāṇi, Venkaṭarama Śāstri, Śrī Thyagaraja's contemporary Vadivelu and others; the *jāvalis* (erotic compositions) in Telugu, Canarese and Tamil, etc. I may also mention here the *jāvalis* of Subbarāya, Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Paṭṭābhīrāmāyya. A special mention should be made of two poems which are admirably adapted for expositi-

42. P. IV-3. 110.

43. MDH. III-1. 26.

tion, by means of music and dance. They are the *Gīta-govinda* of Jayadeva and *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-taraṅgiṇī* of Nārāyaṇa-tīrtha.

The *aṣṭapadis* of the former poet related to the love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhā and were sung by the author Jayadeva himself. His wife Padmāvatī used to dance in his *pūjā* room to the accompaniment of his divine music. The *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-taraṅgiṇī* also deals with incidents in the life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa up to his marriage with Rukmiṇī and contains not only songs but also *svaras* for dance recitals. Mahārāja Svāti Tirunāl of Travancore also composed *padā-varṇas*. Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita composed a *padam* beginning with the words *rūpamuzūci*. Sri C. R. Srinivasa Iyengar has, in his learned work on *Indian Dance*, referred to numerous composers of *padams* such as Govindasvāmi Ayya, Śobhanagiri Vāru, Virabhadrayya, Ghanam Śinayya, Kastūri Rāṅga, Mallikārjuna, and others. The *padams* were all meant to accompany and guide dances. Some of them address human lovers and others are addressed to gods in a mood of passionate devotion. The total volume of *padam* literature is colossal and bewildering.

Some of the Tamil poems of Muttu Tāṇḍavar and Gopālakṛṣṇa Bhārati lend themselves to æsthetic expression in dance. The famous poem *naṭanam-ādinār* of the latter contains *svaras* for expression through dance. Other noteworthy poets are Madhurakavi, Mambazhakkavirāyar, Kavi-kuñjara Bhārati and Mārimuttu Pillai. The *tillānas* form a special group of dance interblending words and *svaras* in a most artistic, intricate and masterly manner. There are also the *padams* of Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Papavinasam Mudaliar and others. A sacred type of compositions called *kaustubhams* consists of dance compositions to the accompaniment of which dances take place before particular divinities.

The *padams* and *jāvalis* referred to above have *śṛṅgāra* as their motif. But the emotion of love can have relation to a human lover especially a rich prince or noble man and believed or can be raised to divine level. Even the former can be rendered in a dignified, noble and uplifting manner or in an indignified, ignoble and degrading manner. The art of dance fell into ill-repute because courtezans took it up exclusively and brought down its level. Now that kings, noblemen and their puppets have vanished, it will be well to select for dance recitals such *padams* as have an inter-fusion of *śṛṅgāra* and *bhakti*, with greater emphasis on *bhakti* than on *śṛṅgāra*. Sex-life and the life spiritual should be unified by uplifting the former and not by degrading

the latter. A single gesture can evoke in us high and pure rapture or a low physical craving. Art should be the gate leading to purer joys of life.

In spite of such a larger number of *padam* compositions, modern audiences, who naturally crave for variety and refinement, are prone to find a certain monotony in their motifs and methods. When Srimathi Rukmini Devi learnt *Bharata-nāṭyam* enthusiastically and won for it public approval and applause by her mastery of its technique and her originality in representation, I requested her to take up *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, *Gīta-govinda* and *Kumāra-sambhava* and include them in her dance-repertoire. She did so and succeeded wonderfully by her peerless creative genius. She then perfected the dance-presentation of *Kutrāla-kuravañji*. She has now taken up *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* and has, with the help of the great musician Sri Vasudevachar, given a *Nāṭya-nāṭaka* rendering of *Sītā-svayamvara*. The other great stories in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the equally great stories in the *Mahābhārata*, *Bhāgavata*, Kālidāsa's plays, Bhavabhūti's *Uttara-rama-carita*, Śilappadikāram, Maṇimekhalai, Kamba *Rāmāyaṇam*, Bhārati's *Pāncālī-śapatham*, etc., could be rendered through dances and will enhance the variety and beauty of *Bharata-nāṭya* hereafter. Srimathi Rukmini Devi has completed the preparation of artistes to present *Uṣā-pariṇaya* and has presented it in the *Bhāgavata-mela* style. The two types of dance, *Bharata-nāṭya* as solo dancing and group dancing can flourish side by side, as solo vocalist music and orchestra (group music) can flourish side by side, both being loyal to the Indian æsthetics.

It seems to me that in future, endeavours should be made to produce further new poetic compositions for representation by dance by taking up the life-stories of the Nāyanmārs and of the supreme Śaiva *Samayā-cāryas* (Māṇikkavācagar, Sambandhar, Sundarar and Appar) and their compositions (*Tiruvācakam* and *Tevāram*), as well as of the Ālvārs and their compositions (*Divya Prabandham*). When such an attempt is successfully made, Indian dance in Tamil Nad will have an unparalleled repertoire of poetic compositions suitable for representation in dance.

The essential Aspects of Bharata-Nāṭyam

Two Tamil words, *aḍavu* and *jati*, contain the key to the classical art of *Bharata-nāṭya* in Tamil Nad. *Aḍavus* form the alphabet of the language of dance and gesture. They combine quick footwork

and express finger-gestures. The word *aḍavu* occurs in verse 63 of the Tamil work on dance called *Bharata-senāpatīyam*, though it is not found in the great Tamil epic *Śilappadikāram*. The word probably means the union of music (*iṣai*) and rhythm (*tāla*), as the Tamil word *aḍai* means putting together. The word *aḍavu* corresponds to the Sanskrit word *karana* which is made up of *sthāna* (pose), *cārī* (foot-work) and *nṛtta-hastas* (finger-gesture). The *aḍavus* are said to be ten in number, each of them having twelve subdivisions.

Jatis are various harmonious and rhythmical permutations and combinations of *aḍavus* in particular *tālas* and *naḍais* and are brought out by *śollukkattus* (sound combinations). The *svara* (tempo) may be slow, medium or fast. Thus the harmonious inter-weaving of *aḍavus*, *śollukkattus* and *svaras* form the *jatis* in a supreme work of art.

A *Bharata-nāṭyam* performance in Tamil Nad consists of (1) *alārippu*, (2) *jatisvaram*, (3) *śabdham*, (4) *varṇam*, (5) *padam*, (6) *tillāna* and (7) *maṅgalam*. The dance recital from *alārippu* to *tillāna* and *maṅgalam* is based on two urges, namely increasing variety and diversity. This is a natural, charming and graceful evolution and has no parallel elsewhere in India or abroad. The word *alārippu* seems to me to mean the 'blossoming of a flower'. The unfolding of a bud into a flower is a natural evolution. *Alar* means a flower. Goddess Padmāvatī is called in Tamil *Alarmel-maṅgai* (the maiden seated on a flower, i.e., a lotus). The Tamil name *Alamelu* is a shortened form of the word. The great Tamil poet Kamban in his immortal epic poem says that the face of Rāma, when he heard about the royal decree of his going into exile for fourteen years, was calm and lovely like a blossomed flower.

அலர்ந்த செந்தாமரையை ஒத்ததம்மா.

(Kamba Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, 295.)

Alārippu is an invocatory dance for about five minutes in which the artist invokes the blessings of God, the *guru* and the audience for the success of her dance recitals by appropriate gestures. The *jati* or dance-shorthand *ti tai ta ti ta tai* is the key of the *alārippu*, which is a preliminary exercise preparing the body for the intricate footwork and gestures, etc., to follow. The *jatisvaras* are in one or another of the various *rāgas* (tune) and *tālas* (time-rhythm). *Jatis* existed from the time of *Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra* and mean time-measures. *Svaras* were added to them later on and mean musical notes.

Both fit in and harmonize with rhythmic footwork patterns, and graceful gestures and movements of the neck, face, eyes, eyebrows and eyelashes. In *śabdham*, *abhinaya* comes in for the first time. It glorifies God or a King. The *sāhitya* (poetry) will go with a short *jati* and *śollukkattu* like *ta-tanam-dhum*. The *varṇam* is an intricate, elaborate and difficult work of art. It is a comparatively long composition and combines and blends poetry (*sāhitya*) with *svaras*, *rāga*, *abhinaya* and *nṛtta* along with lovely and glamorous swing, sway and movements of the various limbs of the body and the body as a whole. It fuses *bhāva*, *rāga* and *tāla*. It is generally in one of the *tālas*, *aṭa*, *rūpaka*, *ādi*, or *jampa*. Thus *alārippu* and *jatisvara* correspond to *nṛtta* (pure dance), while in *varṇam*, *padam* and emotion (*bhāva*), are in a combination, called *nṛtya*. A *padam* is generally a love-song interpreted by finger-gestures and by movements of face and eyes. It is not complicated by much footwork. The love inspiration of the song may also be in regard to the divine lover (God). The *padams* are in Telugu and Tamil. The Telugu *padams* generally centre round God Kṛṣṇa, whereas the Tamil *padams* centre round God Muruga (Subrahmanya or Kumāra). In *padam*, there is as much room for the exhibition of originality and innate skill (*manodharma*) as in *niraval* in music. *Padams* are generally in slow tempo. *Tillāna* is the growing piece in every dance performance. It is generally in slow tempo cum medium tempo cum quick tempo and consists of various complex dance-patterns full of the joy of movement. Every *aḍavu* is interpreted in slow, medium and quick tempos. We find in the *tillāna* a glamorous combination of dance-patterns and gestures and emotional nuances expressed by the movements of the eyes, eyebrows and the neck. The *tillāna* is generally followed by a Sanskrit verse or with the song *naṭanam āḍinār* depicting the eternal dances of God Nāṭarāja.

Dance in Bharata-nāṭya

The vigorous masculine type of dance is called *Tāṇḍava*. It is said that there are seven types of *tāṇḍavas*, and twenty varieties of *mārga* (classical dance) and sixteen varieties of *deśī* (popular dance) of *lāsya* (the graceful feminine type of dance).

Dance is classified also as *nṛtta*, *nṛtya* and *nāṭya*. Dhanañjaya's *Daśā-rūpaka* says (I. 9) that *nṛtta* is *tāla* and *laya* (rhythm), *nṛtya* is based on *bhāva* (emotion), and *nāṭya* is *rasa* (aesthetic enjoyment). The question is one of emphasis. *Tāla*, *laya*, *bhāva* and *rasa* exist in

all. *Tāla* and *laya* predominate in *nṛtta*, *bhāva* in *nṛtya*, and *rasa* in *nāṭya*. *Nṛtta* (pure dance) consists of beautiful dance-sequences, combined movements of the feet with the gestures of the fingers and is regulated by *tālas* (musical time-intervals). It is pure dance consisting of footwork, pose and gesture. *Nṛtya* is dancing for exhibiting *bhāva* (emotion) by gesticulation without words. *Nāṭya* includes words as well as *abhinaya* (gestures), footwork and pose for the purpose of evocation of *rasa*. *Nāṭya-nāṭaka* is a dance-drama, while *nāṭaka* is a drama proper.

Abhinaya in Bharata-nāṭya

It is in India, especially in the *Bharata-nāṭya*, we see that the supreme function of the art of dance is the expression of emotions (*rasas*), whereas dance elsewhere is only rhythmic movement. *Abhinaya* is the interpretation and external expression of emotion by the eyes, eyebrows, eyelashes, facial features, voice and tone, gestures, poses, neck and head movements, etc., which parts are beautiful in themselves and harmoniously combine into a lovelier whole as mirrored in the artist's mind and which will be a language as marvellous and expressive as the human language. Bharata says that the prefix *abhi* (along) plus the root *nī* (lead) means the carrying forward of the felt emotion to the stage of expression of emotion.

अभिपूर्वस्तु णीञ्धातुः पुरा मुख्यार्थनिर्णये ।

यस्मात् प्रयोगं नयति तस्मादभिनयः स्मृतः ॥

विभावयति यस्माच्च नानार्थान् हि प्रयोगतः ।

शाखाङ्गोपाङ्गसंयुक्तस्तस्मादभिनयः स्मृतः ॥ (VIII, 6-7)

Mallinātha says in his commentary on the *Kirātārjunīya* that *abhinaya* is a movement manifesting emotion and the joy of emotion.

अभिनयः रसभावादिव्यञ्जकश्चेष्टाविशेषः (X. 42)

While the movements in pure dance are largely controlled by rules and conventions, there is full scope for originality and imagination in *abhinaya*. Of course, even in *nṛtta*, dignity, beauty, charm and grace are no less important than adherence to rules and conventions. But in *abhinaya*, there is far more room for freedom, imagination, creativeness and originality. We may apply to it the words of Mammaṣa in the *Kāvyaprakāśa*. The poet's genius creates a world which is

not bound by the fetters of Destiny, which is of the essence of joy and independent of every thing else and which shines with the nine *rasas*.

नियतिकृतनियमरहितां ह्लादैकमयीमनन्यपरतन्त्राम् ।

नवरसरुचिरां निर्मितिमादधती भारती कवेर्जयति ॥ (I. 1)

Elaborate rules have been laid down in Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* and other works about the four aspects of *abhinaya* and about the various movements of the body from the foot to the head. These aspects heighten the æsthetic appeal of dance.

Teacher in Indian Dance

The highest æsthetic joy results when the *ācārya* (teacher), artist, audience and auditorium have a harmonious inter-relation. Kālidāsa says in his play *Mālavikāgnimitra* that some dance-masters are experts in the art but cannot teach well while others teach well but may not be great experts and that the best teacher is he who is a great expert as well as an able teacher.

श्लिष्टा क्रिया कस्यचिदात्मसंस्था

संक्रान्तिरन्यस्य विशेषयुक्ता ।

यस्योभयं साधु स शिक्षकाणां

धुरि प्रतिष्ठापयितव्य एव ॥

(I. 16)

The *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* says that the teacher should be handsome, well-spoken, bold, capable, of good-birth, learned in the æsthetic science, with a sweet voice well-versed in vocal music, instrumental music and dance and endowed with ability and originality.

रूपवान् मधुराभाषी धृती वाग्मी पटुस्तथा ।

कुलाङ्गनासुतश्चैव शास्त्रज्ञो मधुरस्वरः ॥

गीतवाद्यादिनृत्तज्ञो सिद्धकः प्रतिभानवान् ।

एतादृशगुणैर्युक्तो नट इत्युच्यते बुधैः ॥

In the Tamil epic *Śīlappadikāram* (*Araṇgetrukkāthai* 12 to 25), it is said that the dance-master should be a master of the two types of *ahakkūthu* (dance), *mārga* (classical) and *deśi* (folk dance) and also of the various other kinds of dances (*alliyam*, *kuḍam*, *pūvai*, *kodukolli*,

nāṇḍuranṅam, kuḍai, tuḍi, pīli, marakkāl, mal and kaḍayam) and of diverse songs and of all the *tālas*.

இருவகைக் கூத்தினிலக்கண மறிந்து
பலவகைக் கூத்தும் விலக்கிநிற் புணர்ந்து
பதினேராலும் பாட்டும் கொட்டும்
விதிமாண் கொள்கையின் விளங்க வறிந்தாங்
காடலும் பாடலும் பரணியுந் தூக்குங்
கூடிய நெறியின் கொளுத் துங்காலைப்
பிண்டியும் பிணையலு மெழிற்கையுந் தொழிற்கையுங்
கொண்ட வகையறிந்து கூத்து வருகாலைக்
கூடை செய்த கைவார்த்துக் களைதலும்
வாரஞ் செய்தகை கூடையின் களைதலும்
பிண்டி செய்தகை பிண்டியிற் களைதலுங்
குரவையும் வரியும் விரவல செலுத்தி
யாடற் கமைந்த வாசான்றன் றோடும்.

A great teacher must be a master of the seven basic *tālas* (*dhruva, madhyama, rūpaka, jampai, triputai, ata* and *eka* with 14, 10, 6, 7, 13, and 4 *akṣaras*, respectively) and the five *jatis* (*caturaśram, trīśram, kāntam, miśram* and *saṅkīrṇam*, namely, *taka, timi, ta kiṭa, ta ka ta kiṭa, ta ki ta ta ka dimi* and *taka timi ta ka ta kiṭa*). There are many intricate *tālas*. The *tāla* *Siṃhānandana* has 128 beats. Along with such mastery, he must be a master also of *abhinaya*. Only then, there can be a perfect rendering of the *bhāva* of the song.

It must be borne in mind that in every dance performance the dance-artist must begin the performance with a reverential folding of the palms to her teacher (*guruvandana*). The teacher was called *Nāṭyācārya* in Sanskrit and *Nāṭṭuvanār* in Tamil. The term *nāṭṭuvanār* has an obvious affinity with the Sanskrit root *naṭ* (to act or to dance). Dance-tuition is called in Tamil *nāṭṭuvāṅgam*. The word *nāṭṭu-muttu* refers to *nāṭṭu* (*nāṭṭuvanār*) and *muttu* (*mṛdaṅgam* player). The *nāṭṭuvanārs*, like the sculptors (*śilpis*), in Tamil Nad were proficient in three languages namely, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. Their profession was hereditary and they were proud of it and would never give it up. The public had great regard for them because they were able singers and dance teachers and were men full of devotion to God. The son of a *nāṭṭuvanār* used to get his lessons in the art of *nāṭṭuvāṅgam* even in his boyhood. His father used to teach him, beating rhythmic tune with a stick called *tāṭṭu-kkazhi*. The boy learnt the correct footwork and gestures, mastered the intricacies of *tāla, naḍai, jati* and *tīrmānam*. It was in this way that the pupil became an adept in

course of time and began to practice his father's profession with consummate dignity and ability.

The *nāṭṭuvanār's tāṭṭu-kkazhi* (a stick about 18 inches long and one inch thick) is the magic wand wielded by him to impart his lessons to the pupil. He keeps up the *tāla* perfectly by beating the wooden piece before him with this wand. The artist can execute the rhythmic patterns of gesture and footwork only if the teacher's art keeps time with *śollukkattus* and *adavus*. The teacher's evocation of sounds and the dance-artists' evocation of patterns of footwork and gesture must combine and commingle in a perfect manner. The genius and originality of the teacher must inspire the pupil and in return the genius and originality of the pupil must inspire the teacher. The rules and conventions must form the basement, but genius and originality must build the superstructure.

The dance-teacher's school room is called *śilambukkūḍam*. The flooring is made of mud and clay and is hence even and soft to the feet of the dancer. The room is ordinarily eight feet by five feet. The pupil's initiation into the art is in her fifth year, when she merely sits and watches the lessons. The actual initiation is in her seventh year and begins with a ceremony called *taṇḍiam-piḍittal* (holding pole). This is referred to in the *Śilappadikāram*. The commentator *Adiyār-kunallār* says in his commentary on these lines :

“ ஏழாண்டி யற்றியோ ரீராண்டின்
சூழ்க பூன்மன்னற்குக் காட்டல் வேண்டி ”

“ ஐயாண்டில் தண்டியம்பிடித்துப் பன்னீராண்டில்
வீரக்கழல் சூழ்ந்த காலினையுடைய சோழன்
கரிகால் பெருவளத்தாற்கு அவனவையரங்கேற்றி
காட்டலை விரும்பி என்க ”.

(*Araṇgetrukkūthai*, lines 10, 11)

The ceremony is as follows : Paddy is spread in a room in a square form on an auspicious day. Two ladies hold the pole across the centre of the place. The apprentice danseuse holds the middle of the pole with her hands and learns to dance to the rhythmic beat of the dance master's stick. The first lesson is called *tāṭṭi-k-kumbiḍutal*. She has to pat the ground with her feet alternatively and make *aṇḍali* gesture with her hands (*patākā*). The dance lessons are given thrice a day with intervals for food and rest. Fees were not charged before for the lessons. Presents used to be given on special days like the Tamil

New Year's day, the *Vijayadasami* day and on the day called *servai* day when *alārippu* is taught. The *arangetral* (public dance performance) takes place after the girl undergoes, seven years' training, i.e., in her twelfth year. On that day, presents of money and new clothes are given to the teacher as on the earlier day when *gajjai* (*kinḱinī* bells) are tied around the ankles. Nowadays, *arangetrals* take place after a shorter course of training.

Pupil

Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* says that a danseuse should have high intelligence, strength, beauty, knowledge of time-measures (*tālas*) and tempo (*laya*), appreciation of sentiments, youth, eagerness for knowledge, capacity for learning the art, retentiveness, absence of stage fright and enthusiasm. (XXVII, 100, 101.)

The pupil must have certain traits if she is to be an expert and successful artist. The *Abhinaya-darpana* says that she should be slender, young and lovely, with full round breasts, self-confident, charming, witty, agreeable, skilled in rhythmic steps and stops, with large eyes, able to accompany vocal and instrumental music with a full knowledge of time-measures, well-dressed and well-decorated, and with a charming and happy face.

तन्वी रूपवती श्यामा, पीनोन्नतपयोधरा ।

प्रगल्भा सरसा कान्ता कुशला ग्रहमोक्षयोः ॥

विशाललोचना गीततालवाद्यानुवर्तिनी ।

परार्ध्यभूषासंपन्ना प्रसन्नमुखपङ्कजा ।

एवंविधगुणोपेता नर्तकी समुदीरिता ॥

(23-25)

It says also that the ten types of girls should not be accepted for training in the art of dance, namely, girls with white specks in the eyeballs, with scanty tresses, with thick lips, drooping breasts, very fat, very lean, very tall or very short, hunch-backs, and girls without a sweet voice.

पुष्पाक्षी केशहीना च स्थूलोष्ठी लम्बितस्तनी ।

अतिस्थूलातिकृशा अत्युच्छ्राप्यतिवामना ।

कुब्जा च स्वरहीना च दशैता नाट्यवर्जिताः ॥

(27)

It says also that the dancer should have alertness, steadiness, harmony (*rekḥā*), ability for *bhramarī* (lovely circular movement), a

lovely glance, endurance, memory, devotion to art, clear articulation and power of song. These are the inner *prāṇās* (vital factors) of the dances, the outer *prāṇās* being the drums, cymbals, flute, chorus, drone, lute, bells and an able male singer (*gāyaka*) to sing the songs. The tiny bells tied around the ankles of the dancer should be made of bronze (*kāṁsya*), well-shaped, beautiful and having a charming resonance. They have the stars as their *devatās* (tutelary deities) and should remain one *aṅgulī* (finger) apart from one another. The danseuse should tie in tight knots with blue thread two hundred of them or hundred in each of her feet.

The Evolution of Bharata-nāṭyam in Tamil Nad and Beyond.

In Tamil Nad, the art of *Bharata-nāṭya* was patronized by the kings and nobles and underwent evolution of new lines which were based on the ancient theory and practice of the art. The Naik kings who were scions or commanders of the Vijayanagar kings such as Achutappa Naik (1592 to 1614 A.D.) and his successors Raghunatha Naik and Vijayaraghavalu Naik (1614 to 1673 A.D.) were great lovers and patrons of music and dance. During their time, Carnatic music was given a final basis and form by the *Caturdaṇḍī-prakāśikā* of Venkaṭa-makhin whose genius kindled later on the genius of the supreme trinity of Carnatic music. Kṣetrajña, the author of the ever famous *padams*, was a genius of those days. The Maharatta kings of Tanjore, Pratāpa Simha and Tulāji (1741 to 1787 A.D.) were as great lovers and patrons of the fine arts as their Naik predecessors. Mahadeva Annavi and Subbaraya Nattuvanar were great artists in the realm of *Bharata-nāṭya* and were close friends of the musical geniuses mentioned above. The final shape was given by Subbaraya Nattuvanar's famous sons Chinnayya, Ponnayya, Vaḍivelu and Śivānandam, who are called the Tanjore Quartette and who started the new fashionable *Bharata-nāṭya* technique on its brilliant careers. The teachers of *Bharata-nāṭya* in Tamil Nad today are either their descendants or in their line of discipleship.

Before the time of these four geniuses, the *nṛtta-kṛtis* (dance-compositions) called *Deyam*, *Cūlatti*, *Kouthuvam* (*Kaustubham* in Sanskrit), *Simhānandanam*, etc., were in vogue and were danced to the recital of *jatis* (sound-combinations) and to the accompaniment of a drum called *śuddha mardalam* (similar to the modern *mṛdaṅgam*, but bigger in size).

But the genius of the above-said four brothers placed *Bharata-nāṭya* in Tamil Nad on a finer æsthetic basis. The dance was called *śadir* and was by women, whereas *Bhāgavata-mela* of Tanjore and *Kathakali* of Kerala were by men. The *Bharata-nāṭya* as developed by them is the *lāsya* dance and the *prayoga* or style is said to be *sukūmāra* (graceful). The four brothers divided the *Bharata-nāṭyam* performance into (1) *alāriṭṭu*; (2) *jatisvaram*; (3) *śabdham*; (4) *varṇam*; (5) *padams* interpreted and explained by *abhinaya*; (6) *tillāna*; and (7) *maṅgalam* (auspicious conclusion with devotion to God). They combined the *aḍavus*, the *tālas*, the *svaras* and the *nṛtta-haṣṭas* into a harmonious whole consisting of the above-mentioned divisions. They became in course of time the *samsthāna-vidvāns* of the Tanjore king Sarfoji. Eventually, Chinnayya became the *samsthāna-vidvān* of the Maharaja of Mysore and Vaḍivelu that of Svāti Tirunal, the Maharaja of Travancore. Vaḍivelu was a great expert in violin also. Ponnayya and Sivānandam held the hereditary office of *nāṭṭuvāṅgam* (dance-teacher) in the Brhadiśvara temple at Tanjore. It was this family that trained various disciples who lived at Tanjore, Pandanainalloor (shortened as Pandanalloor) Annachatram, Nidamangalam and other places in the Tanjore District. The Tanjore family is now represented by Kittappa. Minakshisundaram Pillai of the Pandanalloor family passed away recently and represented the Pandanalloor style of dance. His son Muthayya and his son-in-law Chockalingam Pillai (who is the dance teacher in the Indian Fine Arts Society, Egmore) are practising and teaching the art. The dance teacher Vaḍivelu Nattuvanar is a son-in-law of Minakshisundaram Pillai. Subbaraya Pillai of Pandanalloor is another well-known instructor. Kandappa Nattuvanar, who is the teacher of the famous dance-artist Srimathi Balasaraswathi, represents the Madras style and tradition of the art of dance.

Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai is another well-known teacher. The famous dance-artists Kamala Lakshman and Radha were trained by him. K. N. Dandayuthapani Pillai is another well-known teacher and the great dance-artist Srimathi Vyjayanthimala was trained by him. Kuppiah Nattuvanar is another famous teacher.

Srimathi Rukmini Devi's learning and practising the art of dance led to its being learnt by women belonging to well-to-do families. She is today a world famous dance-artist. She learnt the art of dance from Minakshisundaram Pillai of Pandanalloor. Her art institution Kalakshetra in Adyar has trained many girls in the art of dance.

The slow disappearance of dances (called *śadir*) by *devadāsīs* (dancers attached to the temples) is due to the fact that social reform frowned on immoral women practising the art. The dance of dedicated women dancing in temples must have developed in the course of centuries. Such dedication must have been at the beginning like that of the vestal virgins in Rome. Their dance with music and drum was called *Cinna-melam*, whereas *Nāgaswaram* music accompanied by the *tavul* (big drum) was called *Periya-melam*. In course of time, the word *śadir* (based on the Sanskrit word *nāṭya*) came to have immoral associations, when dancing by women became a profession in addition to being a temple ritual. Thus was how *nāṭya* became degraded as *nautch* fell into disrepute. In recent times, there has been a great wave of reformation by the slow disappearance of gainful prostitution by *devadāsīs* taking to married life and by girls belonging to rich and respectable families taking to the art of dance in ever increasing numbers. Let us remember how the examples of princess Uttarā in the *Mahābhārata*, princess Mālavikā in Kālidāsa's drama, Mīrā Bai the mystic dancer and devotee, and Padmāvatī the wife of Jayadeva who danced to the accompaniment of his songs and how in ancient and medieval times respectable women practised the art of dance. In modern times, Rabindranath Tagore encouraged the learning of dance by boys and girls of the upper classes and enabled them to take part in dramas, dances and dance-dramas.

In the nineteenth century, a princess of Tanjore was married to the Prince of the Baroda State. When the bride went to Baroda, many *nāṭṭuvanārs*, *devadāsīs* and musicians accompanied her. Kāṇṇusami Nattuvanar went to Baroda with them. The dancing girls Kantimati and Gauri also went to Baroda. Kantimati's son Kuberanar alias K. A. Tanjorekar is now the junior dance-teacher in the University of Baroda.

The Evolution of Indian Dances - other Classical Dances

I have dealt *in extenso* with the other forms of dance in India in my lectures delivered to the Madras University referred to above. This series relates mainly to *Bharata-nāṭya*. I hence make a brief reference to them here. *Kathakali* is the dance form in Kerala. It is a difficult and elaborate art and seeks to express a wide range of emotions through *mudrās* (finger-gestures) and the movements of

eyes, eyebrows, cheeks and lips. The dancers wear a peculiar costume and have a peculiar make up. The dances are of the vigorous type (*tāṇḍava*). The dancers are men, women seldom take part in *Kathakali*, their roles being taken up by men. The actors wear painted masks. While *Bharata-nāṭya* is a solo dance, *Kathakali* consists of group dance as well.

Kathak dancing prevails in North-West India, especially at Lucknow and Jaipur. It combines *nṛtta*, *nṛtya* and *nāṭya*. We see in it a fusion of *lāsya* and *tāṇḍava*. In the *lāsya* style, gestures and in the *tāṇḍava* style foot-rhythms prevail. A peculiarity is the gyration or whirling or spinning movement. The gestures are few and there is not much of emotional expression. The word 'kathaka' means 'a story-teller' and the objective of *Kathak* dance was to express the emotions of the characters in the two great Indian epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* through gestures and choreographic pantomime. Two varieties of *Kathak* dance are called 'tukāras' and 'parans'. They are small pieces of dance-footwork and conform to the beating of the drum (*tabla*). The *laya* is made slowly more and more intensified and complicated. A *Kathak* dancer ties nearly 200 bells round the feet and controls the movements of the feet in such a way as to make all the bells tinkle or only some of them tinkle. The musician plays a tune on the *sāraṅgī* and the harmonium, while the drummer keeps the time-rhythm (*laya*) and the dancer interprets the song by gestures and footwork. There are two main schools of the *Kathak* dance, namely, the Jaipur school and the Lucknow school. The Jaipur school emphasises footwork rhythms and movements of the entire body, whereas the Lucknow school is more static and specializes in *bhāvas* or graceful poses and glances. The two brothers Kalikaprasad and Binadin Maharaj were great experts of the *Kathak* style of dance. The sons of the former, Shambhu Maharaj, Acchan Maharaj and Lacchu Maharaj have kept up the style very well. Shambhu Maharaj learned the dance from Binadin Maharaj and later from Acchan Maharaj. He has given over a thousand performances and was honoured with the title of *Nāṭya Samrāj* at a conference held at Dehra Dun. He is a master of both the *nṛtta* and *nṛtya* aspects of *Kathak*. While Binadin and Acchan perform *abhinaya* standing, Shambhu Maharaj does sitting and has developed a marvellous style of his own. He was honoured as *Abhinaya-Cakravarti* at the Experts' Committee Session held by the Music Academy in Madras in 1958. In Mathura, Kṛṣṇa's *rāsahilā* is danced in *Kathak* style.

The *Manipuri* dance attracted Rabindranath Tagore very much. It relates to the story of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Its origin was the State of Manipur in the north-eastern border of Assam. Its main dance forms are (1) *laiharova*, (2) *astra-vidyā*, (3) *chalan-gathan* and (4) *rās-līlā*. A peculiar feature of this dance is the flounced skirt and veil called *mukhambi* of Rādhā. The music consists of *manjira* (cymbals), *khol* (drum), *muralī* (flute) and vocal music. The dance is graceful and devotional in its nature. It excels in beautiful serpentine movements. It is danced in a circle or in a semi-circle. Kṛṣṇa comes and stands in *tribhaṅgī* (three-curved) pose. Then comes Rādhā with eight girl friends (*aṣṭa-sakhīs*). Then comes the other *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are in the centre and the maidens stand in a circle around them and dance to the music. The dance is danced in imitation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa* dance (known in Manipur as *rās*). *Rās* means sentiment and *bhāva* means emotional mood. The *rās-līlā* is full of beauty of jewellery and splendour of costume in which very diminutive mirrors and scintillating mica are sewn. It is danced on the *rās-pūrṇimā* day before the temple of Lord Govindji (Kṛṣṇa) at Manipur.

The *Odissa* dance of Orissa is one of the dance styles referred to in Bharata's *Nāṭya-sāstra*. It has an affinity to the South Indian dance. It specializes in bodily flexion, curved outline of the human body being more charming than the straight posture. The flexions are called *ati-bhaṅgī*, *sama-bhaṅgī*, *tri-bhaṅgī*, etc.

In modern India, we witness all these forms as well as *Bharata-nāṭya* at different centres. There should not be any mixture or hybridization of these styles in the name of oriental dances. Each style must preserve its distinctiveness, while progressively refining itself.

There are also minor styles of dance such as the *Nava-sandhi* dances at the commencement of temple festivals in Tamil Nad, in Andhra the *Kūchīpūḍī* dances of Siddhendra Yogi, in Karnataka the *Yakṣa-gāṇam*, in Orissa the *Chow* dances, the dances of Bihar, etc. *Bharata-nāṭya* is the classical art and is the norm and the other styles are variations of the classical art.

It will be appropriate to refer here to the *Bhāgavata-mela* performances in the villages, Melattoor, Soolamangalam, Oothukad, etc., in the Tanjore District. They have fallen into disuse except in Melattoor. They are dance-dramas written by Venkatarama Sastri of Melattoor about 150 years ago. Four of them—*Prahlāda*, *Hariscandra*, *Mārkaṇḍeya* and *Uṣā-pariṇayam* are even now popular. They are combined

with classical Carnatic music and the *abhinaya* technique of *Bharata-nāṭya* and are rendered with great piety and devotion. They thus combine exquisite poetry and dramatic action with song and dances. What are called *darus* in the *Bhāgavata-mela* dance-dramas are fine musical compositions. They alternate with *svara* manipulations and pure dances. They are similar to *Kathakali* and yet different from it in style and content. They are all compositions in Telugu because the court language in Tamil Nad was Telugu from the time of the Vijayanagar kings. The dance-dramas by the saintly Swami Nārāyaṇa-tīrtha (author of the *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-taraṅgiṇī*) in Telugu were earlier than *Bhagavata-mela* dance-dramas.

The *Kuravañji* is another fine dance-drama, while the ordinary *Kuravañji* is the *Kutrāla-kuravañji*. In the *Kuravañji*, the heroine is in line with a god or a king and consults a *kuratti* (gypsy fortune-teller) to ascertain if her desire will be fulfilled. The songs and dances expounding this simple theme are diverse and attractive. The princess and her maids sing poems describing urban life, whereas the gypsy-woman's songs describe hills, forests and rivers.

Indian dances in general, *Bharata-nāṭya* in particular, have had a powerful influence on the art of dance in Ceylon, Indonesia and Far-East Asia including Thailand (Siam) and Cambodia, and also in China and Japan. In Java, Bali, Cambodia, etc., Indian Art had a dominant influence. The sacred architecture at Angorvat and Prambanam and Borobodur had an Indian inspiration. Mr. Havell says that such motifs went west and that 'we find a perfectly oriental atmosphere and strange echoes of eastern symbolism in the medieval cathedrals of Europe and see their structural growth gradually blossoming with all the exuberance of Eastern imagery'. The Indian influence is at its greatest in the music and dance and the general cultural atmosphere in the island of Bali, where the *pandel*, *jangar*, *legong* and *kabiyar* dances interpret the heroic actions of Arjuna and other heroes of Indian mythology. The *Ketiak* or monkey dance depicts the *Rāmāyana* story. There are also dances depicting the Buddhist *Jātaka* stories. The dance-gestures are of Indian origin. The dress and decoration of the Javanese and Butanese dancers are like those seen in the Ajanta frescoes.

THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN DANCE—FOLK DANCES

Though this work is mainly concerned with æsthetic theory and classical music and dance, I wish to refer briefly in conclusion to the

folk-music and folk-dance as these also are the expressions of the innate urge in man to express his innate joy in nature and in human life through beautiful ideas, the silent natural media of stone and metal and through colours, tunes, words and bodily movements. The classical arts are only the bud of the folk-art burst into blossom-green unripe fruit ripened into the colourful glowing of ripe fruits of delicious sweetness.

While the classical arts appeal to the classes and the masses and especially to the former, the folk-arts also appeal to both and especially to the latter. The Indian folk-arts also have been the vehicle of the high and noble, moral and spiritual ideas of India. Both folk-songs and folk-dances are on the decline in India because of the spread of classical arts even into villages by quick modern transport. When I was young, I saw at Kumbakonam a *Bommālāṭṭam*, the dance of puppets on the stage, the operator operating them behind the curtain by strings tied to different parts of his body and also singing exquisite songs. The performance was in the open street during the night and was attended by thousands. The dance of the so-called *Kiñcin* puppet was a marvel and would beat the dance of trained artists in artistry. Even the movements of the puppet's eye-balls were operated by strings! The puppets were animated by the folk-artist into living beings. His name was Puthukudi Swaminathan. Such *bommālāṭṭam* performances are dying out, though late there have been attempts to revive them.

In South India, *Kummi* and *Kolāṭṭam* by young girls are very attractive. The songs and dances take place around a lighted brass lamp which itself is of a beautiful make, or about an image of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in commemoration of the songs and dances of the shepherd-girls of Gokula and Brindavan. The tunes are simple and charming. The songs have poetic beauty and the rhythmic dance-patterns are equally simple, varied, charming and full of grace. The songs relate to the seasons, flowers, fruits, harvests, domestic joys and Godward devotion. The dances include tilting footsteps, graceful bends of the body, charming turns and jumps, chiming hand-gestures and hand-claps. In *Kummi*, the girls clap hands, whereas in *Kolāṭṭam*, they beat one small coloured stick by another. In the *Pinnal-kolāṭṭam*, ropes tied to a pole at its top are used. The girls hold the ends of the ropes with one hand and have a *kol* or a painted stick in the other. As the dance proceeds with quick rhythmic steps, the ropes get wound. Then

follow other rhythmic movements accompanied by songs to unwind the ropes. The songs and the dances, the blooming faces and the colourful garments, give us scenes of romantic loveliness.

These *Kummi* and *Kolāṭṭam* dances were popular in cities, towns and villages, but are now getting out of date as classical dances, dramas and cinemas are found everywhere. In the villages, there used to be also other types of folk-songs and folk-dances practised by men. One type is called *Oyil-āṭṭam*. In it, men dance the stories of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Muruga during temple festivals. The men dancers wear coloured trousers, scarves and have ankle-bells. The songs and dances are found in the districts of Coimbatore, Trichinopoly, Madurai and Ramnad of Tamil Nad.

Other masculine dances are *Kāvaḍi* and *Karagam* dances. A *kāvaḍi* is a small palanquin to which coloured cloths and peacock feathers are tied. It is carried on the shoulder by dancing-devotees of Lord Muruga (Subrahmanya). The songs are in tunes known as *Kāvaḍi-ccindu*. The dances and songs, vocal and instrumental, chime in unison. The *karagam* is a decorated mud-pot full of water. It is carried on the dancer's head. The dance is to propitiate the goddess Māri-amman to ward off epidemics. The *Karagam* dancer, like the *Kāvaḍi* dancer, strikes all sorts of poses and attitude in addition to diverse dance-patterns. Both even let go the support of their hands to the *kāvaḍi* or the *karagam*.

The *Poikāl-kutirai-āṭṭam* is very popular. Two horses are made with bamboo frame work covered by thick paper. These are painted and decorated and look like live horses. There is a hole in the back of the horse. A male dancer stands in the hole in the back of one horse, his legs tied with short wooden tilts, but not seen because of the colourful trappings of the horse. A female dancer is on the other horse. They look like a king and a queen. The dance by both of them chime with the orchestra. The dummy horses move about in bewildering patterns which are both attractive and amusing.

We have also the *Kuravan-kuratti* dances imitating the speech and songs of fortune-telling gypsies.

There are also regular *bhajan* songs of a simple type followed by *bhajan*-dances by men on the occasion of the temple festivals, etc.

I have already referred to the *Bommalaṭṭam*. It was known as *Pāvai-kūttu* in ancient Tamil literature. The *Theru-kūttu* is a dance-

drama enacted in Tamil Nad representing Purāṇic stories. It is called *Vīṭṭi-nāṭaka* in Andhra Pradesh. The shadow play is the projection of the shadows of leather dolls on a white screen. It is not now alive in Tamil Nad, but survives in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

The Tamil epic *Śilappadikarām* refers to group-dances by shepherds (*āyar-kūttu*), by gypsies (*kuravar-kūttu*), and by hunters (*veḍar-kūttu*). There are also folk-dances by the hill tribes (the Todas of Nilagiris, the Lambāḍis of Salem and others). The Madras State Sangita Sangam is doing its best to popularize them through its talented and energetic secretary Sri E. Krishna Iyer.

Dance Now and Then

The dance recitals till two decades ago were of a different sort as compared with those of today. At the present the danseuse holds the stage, while the dance-master, the flutist, the violinist and the drummer are at the extreme right of the artist. Formerly, the dance-master and others used to stand behind the artist. They used to sing and beat the cymbals and recite the *aḍavus*, *jatis*, etc., standing behind the artist, advancing and retreating with her. This was the practice from ancient times as can be seen from the description in the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*, which says that the teacher should be behind the artist while two cymbal-players should be on her right, two *mṛdaṅgam*-players on her left, a singer between the latter and the drone (*śrutikāra*) near. Formerly, the drone was a bag-pipe (*tutti*). The *mṛdaṅgam*-player reproduces on the drum the *śollukkattus*, *aḍavus* and *tīrmānams* recited by the *naṭṭuvanār*. It is said that Nandikeśvara played on the drum, while God Viṣṇu sang and God Śiva danced. The arrangements described above left a droll effect on the mind. The dance was like an advancing and receding wave. The present technique of having the dance orchestra on a side of the stage is appropriate, effective and beautiful and leaves almost the entire stage to the dancer.

Today the girl apprentices do not go through the strenuous discipline described above. Many of them belong to well-to-do families and are students in arts and sciences in modern educational institutions. Further, the old system of payment on special days and on the *araṅgetral* has undergone changes. Monthly fees are paid and special fees are paid at *araṅgetral* time. Before, as well as now, a portion of the sum paid to a danseuse for a performance is paid to the dance-master.

There is much difference between the dancer's costume then and now. Formerly, she used to wear a kind of muslin trousers or pyjamas, a bodice and an upper lace-cloth or sari thrown round the shoulder and tied at the waist. She wore also plenty of ornaments on her body. She had not only diamond jewels in her ears, nose and round her throat, but also head-ornaments shaped like the sun and the moon. She wore *rākkudi* and *jaḍabillai* on her plated tresses, besides plenty of flowers. The improvement in costume has gone on steadily. The costume now wore is very bright, becoming and appropriate. The danseuse is not nowadays, as overloaded with jewellery as before. Further, the modern decoration of the stage by placing two *kuttu-vilakkus* (old style lamps) and a metal image of Natarāja adds to the beauty of the scene and links us with the past, though the electric lights bring the glory of modern illumination. The drop curtain also has become a thing of refined beauty today and attracts the eyes and the minds of the audience.

There has also been an evolution in regard to the tradition of background music. Formerly the dance-master's singing was combined with a good singer's music accompanied by flute, violin, *tambura*, *mṛdaṅgam* and *tālas*. Now music has gone to the right side of the stage and is gentle, subdued, mellowed and charming, not vociferous and obtrusive as of old.

Present Position

I now refer in conclusion to what is being done in some universities in India to encourage the study and practice of music, dance, drama and other fine arts.

In the Baroda University, playing on the *tabla* and *mṛdaṅga* is taught as also dance and dramatics including *Bharata-nāṭya*. It has instituted Diploma and Degree courses in Music, Dance and Dramatics. The Madras University has already included the fine arts of architecture, sculpture, painting and music (Indian and European) in its curricula of studies. The Senate of the Madras University passed unanimously on 14th November, 1958, my resolution about a diploma in Dramatics and Theatre Arts.

It is a matter for pride that in South India, Sri Venkateswara University at Tirupati has taken forward steps for the encouragement of the Fine Arts. It has got degree and title courses in *Bharata-nāṭyam*. For the degree of B.Mus. (Bachelor of Music)—an excellent curriculum of studies has been prescribed.

Future

It is not likely that this hereditary nature of the dance-teacher's function will survive for a long time in the future, because every one desires to choose his profession and undergo the training for it in a suitable public institution. The Sangita Nataka Academy may have to provide Seminars for giving training to persons who desire the profession of teachers of music and dance by giving stipends as a stimulus. Such a Seminar or College will correspond to the colleges for training for the B.T., B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees. For the *nāṭṭu-vāṅgam* (dance teacher's) course, syllabus will have to be laid down. A person who seeks entry into such a college must have some preliminary qualifications. He must have a basic knowledge of Carnatic music if he desires to be a teacher of *Bharata-nāṭya*. He must have sufficient knowledge of *svara* and *laya*. It will be well if the candidate for training in *nāṭṭuvāṅgam* has a diploma in Carnatic music, especially as the *gurukula* system in musical training is disappearing and may become a thing of past.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX (i)

The Madras State Sangita Nataka Sangam has prescribed the following syllabus for training in *Nattuvāṅgam* :

Syllabus for Training in Nattuvāṅgam as approved by the Standing Sub-Committee for Music and Dance on 20th December 1960.

The object of the training in *nattuvāṅgam* is to train talented youngsters with good knowledge of music (with *svara-jñāna*) to do efficient *nattuvāṅgam* and also to teach *Bharata-nāṭyam* to others on correct classical lines. Hence the chosen candidates must be so intensively and carefully trained as to acquire the following among others :

1. Capacity to sing out clearly all the compositions taken up for dance, including the *svara* and *śollukkattus* in three tempos, keeping up the concerned *tālas* correctly in the hands.

2. Knowledge of the *tālas* in vogue in *Bharata-nāṭya* and their variations.

3. Good knowledge of the names and forms of all the main *adavu-jatis*, their sub-divisions and their varieties *nṛtta-hastas* used in them and also basic foot-steps.

4. Capacity to compose *svara*, *jatis* and *śollukkattus* for given compositions.

5. Capacity to render any composition in *svara* notation.

6. Knowledge of the names, usages and significance of all the *astas* (*samyuta* and *asamyuta*), eye movements and neck movements in *abhinaya*.

7. Capacity to detect flaws in rhythm, *aṅgaśuddha*, *sthānas* and *maṇḍala* in others and to correct them.

8. Knowledge of the technical terms such as *nṛtta*, *nṛtya nāṭya*, *tāṇḍava*, *lāsya*, *nāṭya-dharmī*, *loka-dharmī*, *dr̥ṣṭi*, *cārī*, *recaka*, *sthāna*, *maṇḍala*, *karana*, *aṅgaḥāra* and four kinds of *abhinaya*.

9. Knowledge of *rasa* and *bhāva* and their classifications and significance, *nāyikā-nāyaka-bhēdas* and capacity to tell out the *bhāva*, *nayikā* and *nāyaka* of a given *pada* or song.

10. Clear understanding of the meaning (line by line and word by word) of every song taken up in *Bharata-nāṭya*, difference between *padārthābhinaya* and *bhāvābhinaya* and the importance of restraint, suggestiveness and dignity in *abhinaya*.

11. Capacity to piece out *abhinaya* and variations therein for a given song.

12. Significance of the items and their order in a programme of *Bharata-nāṭya*.

13. Difference between *pada-varṇa* and *tāṇḍ-varṇa*, *varṇa* and *svara-jati*.

14. Understanding about how a *jati-svara* is composed.

15. Knowledge of *Abhinaya-Darpana* and relevant portions of the *Nāṭya-sāstra*.

16. Practical training in at least :—

four *alārrippus*

five *jati-svaras*

five classical *varṇas* and *svarā-jātis*
of well known composers.

five *tillānas*

An adequate number of *padas* of which four at least be those of Kṣetrayya and two each of Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Ghanam Seenayya, Sarangapani, Muvaḥur Sabhapathi and Vaitheeswaran Koil Subbarama Iyer.

Two *Aṣṭapadis* ; two *Jāvalis* and two verses.

• APPENDIX (ii)

The course of Part I is as follows :

Part I (a) English language and literature.

(b) Another language—Classical or Modern Indian. (Classical—Sanskrit; Modern Indian—Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi and Urdu).

(c) General Education (The course shall be the same as for the B.A. Degree).

Part II Music including Musicology (Theory), History of Music and special (Theory) subject. The special subject includes an opera, musical instruments, comparative music, Western music (theory and history) and Hindustani music (theory and history).

Part III Including prescribed musical (practical) compositions, *manodharma-sāṅgīta*, *darus* and verses, etc.

For the Sangita Visarada Title in Music, a detailed course of study for three years has been prescribed. For the title course, in *Bharata-nāṭyam* also suitable regulations have been prescribed. For Dramatics and Theatre Arts, suitable courses have been prescribed in the Andhra University.

APPENDIX (iii)

ĀṆGIKA-ABHINAYA IN BHARATA-NĀṬYA

I shall discuss briefly here the various *āṅgika* movements as described in the source-books. When beauty of gestures, works, facial movements and footwork are synthesized and harmonized, the result is pure and exquisite æsthetic joy.

MOVEMENTS OF THE HEAD (ŚIRŚA)

Name of the movement	Description
<i>samaśīras</i> (AD) ..	unmoved position symbolizing meditation, pride, anger and beginning of dance.
<i>udvāhita</i> (NS) ..	head turned to the two sides symbolizing flag, noon, sky, mountain, bird.
<i>adhogata</i> (NS)
<i>adhomukha</i> (AD)	looking down symbolizing shyness, sorrow, bowing, fainting, bathing.
<i>ālokita</i> (AD) ..	turning all round symbolizing sleepiness, intoxication, dizziness, laughter, possession by a devil.
<i>dhuta</i> slow turning from right to left and <i>vice versa</i> .
<i>vidhuta</i> (NS) ..	swift movement symbolizing denial, surprise, indifference, anger, invitation.
<i>ākampita</i> (NS) ..	shaking up and down slowly.

<i>kampita</i> ..	shaking up and down quickly symbolizing anger, questioning, etc.
<i>parivṛtta</i> ..	turning round symbolizing command, anger, aversion, etc.
<i>utksipta</i> ..	head slightly raised and shaking, symbolizing lofty objects, assent, etc.
<i>parivāhita</i> ..	shaking the head on both sides like a <i>cāmaram</i> in a temple symbolizing infatuation, yearning, anxiety, etc.
<i>avadhūta</i> (NS) ..	head turned down.
<i>añcita</i> (NS) ..	head slightly bent on one side.
<i>nikuñcita</i> (NS) ..	head bent on one side and two shoulders raised.

Some works refer to twenty-four movements of the head.

MOVEMENTS OF THE GLANCES

The *Nāṭya-śāstra* describes thirty-six glances relating to eight *rasas*, eight *sthyāyibhāvas* and twenty *sañcāribhāvas*.

The *Abhinaya-darpana* describes eight glances. They are *samadyati* (looking straight symbolizing the beginning of dance, meditation, wonder, etc.), *ālokita* (quickly turning and looking keenly symbolizing the pointing out of all things), *sācī* (glancing sidelong, i.e., through the corner of the eye symbolizing suggesting or hinting), *prālokita* (looking from side to side symbolizing both sides, mental unsteadiness, etc.), *nimīlita* (closing half the eye symbolizing trance, meditation, prayer, great happiness, etc.), *ullokita* (looking up and then lowering symbolizing flag, tower, previous birth, height, moon-light), *anuvṛtta* (glancing up and down very quickly symbolizing anger, affectionate invitation) and *avalokita* (downward look symbolizing anxiety, bed, seeing one's own shadow, etc.). Thus the two works differ in method and details on this matter. There are also diverse words for diverse movements of eyebrows and eyelids.

MOVEMENTS OF THE NECK (GRIVĀ)

According to the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, there are nine movements of the neck. They are *sama* (unmoved), *nata* (neck with face bent), *unnata* (neck with face upturned), *tryasra* (neck with face turned side-ways), *recita* (neck shaken), *kūñcita* (neck with head bent down), *añcita* (neck with head turned back), *valita* (neck with face turned side ways) and *nivṛtta* (neck with face stretched forward).

The *Abhinaya-darpana* describes four movements of the neck, namely, *sundarī* (moving the neck to and fro horizontally, symbolizing friendship, pleasure, consent, etc.), *tiraścīna* (moving up and down symbolizing the brandishing of a sword, the movement of a snake), *parivṛtta* (moving from left to right like a half-moon (ardha-candra) symbolizing erotic glance, kissing the cheeks) and *prakampita* (moving the head forwards and backwards like a dove symbolizing swinging, counting, etc.). Here also the two works differ in method and details.

The general movements of the *hastas* (hand) are stated in the *Abhinaya-darpana*.

Name	Description
1. <i>prasanna</i> ..	extending the fingers
2. <i>kañcita</i> ..	bending the fingers
3. <i>recita</i> ..	separating them
4. <i>punkhita</i> ..	fluttering movement (used in <i>patākā</i> , etc.)
5. <i>apaveṣṭita</i> ..	directed downwards
6. <i>prerita</i> ..	turned back
7. <i>udveṣṭita</i> ..	directed upward
8. <i>vyāvṛtta</i> ..	directed sideways and upwards
9. <i>parivṛtta</i> ..	directed sideways and forward
10. <i>sañketa</i> ..	indicatory
11. <i>cihna</i> ..	symbolic
12. <i>padārtha-tikā</i> ..	conveying meaning

The finger gestures are the most important part of *abhinaya* and fall into two distinct divisions, namely *asamyuta-hastas* (with one hand), *samyuta-hastas* (with both hands) and *nytta-hastas*. *Asamyuta* is called in Tamil as *pinḍi* or *enayavina-kkai* or *citrai-kai* and *samyuta* is called *pinayal* or *enai-kai* or *irattai-kai* and *nytta-hasta* is called the *tezhir-kai* or *nirutta-kai*. The Tamil writers subdivide the hand gestures as male hands (*āṇ-kai*), female hands (*peṇ-kai*), neuter hands (*ali-kai*) and common hands (*potu-kai*). The male hands are *muṣṭi*, *śikharam*, *alāpadma*, *saṁdamśa*, *śilāṇḍi*, *sūci*, *catura*, *patākā* and *tripatākā*. The female-hands are *kaṭaka*, *śukatunḍa*, *kāṅgula*, *pirai-kai*, *arāla*, *annapakka*, *tāmracūḍa* and *māntalai*. The neuter hands are *aravintalai*, *vaṇḍu* (*bhramara*), *mukula*, *kattiri-kai*, *padmapū* and *kapittha*. The common hands are *unnam* (*triśūla*), *maṇḍala*, *valampuri*, *māntalai*, *śaṅgu*, *ilatai*, *dūpam* and *pinḍi*.

The *Abhinaya-darpana* refers to twenty-eight *asamyuta* (single) hand gestures, namely, *patākā*, *tripatākā*, *ardhapatākā*, *kattarimukha*, *mayūra*, *ardhacandra*, *arāla*, *śukatunḍa*, *muṣṭi*, *śikhara*, *kapittha*, *khaṭakāmukha*, *sūci*, *candrakalā*, *padmākara*, *sarpaśīras*, *mrgaśīras*, *śimhamukha*, *kāṅgula*, *alāpadma*, *catura*, *bhramara*, *hamsāśya*, *hamsapatākā*, *sandamśamukula*, *tāmracūḍa* and *triśūla* (also *ūrṇanābha*, *bāṇa* and *ardhasūcikā* according to other writers).

The *Nāṭya-śāstra* enumerates them as twenty-four, namely, *patākā*, *tripatākā*, *kattarimukha*, *ardhacandra*, *arāla*, *śukatunḍa*, *muṣṭi*, *śikhara*, *kapittha*, *khaṭakāmukha*, *sūcimukha*, *padmakōṣa*, *sarpaśīrasa*, *mrgaśīrasa*, *kāṅgula*, *alāpadma*, *catura*, *bhramara*, *hamsāśya*, *hamsapakṣa*, *sandamśamukula*, *ūrṇanābha* and *tāmracūḍa*. (Ch. I verses 4 to 7.)

The *Śilappadikāram* enumerates them as thirty-three, namely, *patākai*, *tripatākai*, *kattarikai*, *dūpam*, *arāla*, *ilampirai* (*ardha-candra*), *śukatunḍa*, *muṣṭi*, *kaṭaka*, *sūci*, *kamalakoṣa*, *kāṅgula*, *kapittha*, *virpīdi*, *kudangai* (*saṁdamśa*), *alāpatra*

(*alāpadma*), *bhramara*, *tāmracūḍa*, *pisūca*, *mukula*, *pinḍi* (*śikhara*), *terinilai* (*ūrṇanābha*), *meṇṇillai* (*triśūla*), *unnam*, *maṇḍalam*, *catura*, *māntalai* (*mrgaśīras*), *śaṅgu*, *vaṇḍu*, *ilatai*, *kaputam*, *makaramukha* and *valampuri*. (Commentary on this work pp. 62-65, Chapter III, *Saivasiddhanta* edition 1942.) The Tamil work quote a verse from *Sūddhānanda-prakāśam* which is an ancient Tamil work.

The Tamil work *Bharata-siddhāntam* refers to twenty-four single hand gestures and nine *deśi* hand gestures. The twenty-four gestures are *patākai*, *tripatākai*, *kattarikai*, *piraikai* (*ardhacandra*), *arāla*, *śukatunḍa*, *muṣṭi*, *śikhara*, *kapittha*, *sūci*, *padmakōṣa*, *aravutalai* (*sarpaśīras*), *māntalai* (*mrgaśīras*), *kāṅgula*, *alāpadma*, *catura*, *vaṇḍu* (*bhramara*), *annavai* (*hamsāśya*), *annapakka* (*hamsapakṣa*), *sandangiṣam* (*saṁdamśa*), *mukula*, *śilāṇḍi* (*ūrṇanābhi*) and *tāmracūḍa*. The nine *deśi* gestures are *dūpam*, *paśācam*, *pinḍi*, *marinikai*, *unnāṭam* (*uccam*), *maṇḍalam*, *śaṅgu*, *ilarkai*, and *valampuri*. Very probably, these were folk-dance gestures, whereas the twenty-four gestures were classical dance-gestures.

The details of the finger-poses relating to the single hand (*asamyuta*) gestures differ in the source-books to some extent, though they agree to a larger extent. A chart of illustrations showing all these poses will be instructive and interesting.

1. *patākā* (flag)
[thumb bent to touch extended fingers]
2. *tripatākā*
(third finger of the above hand bent)
3. *ardhapatākā*
(the little finger of the above hand bent)
4. *kartarimukha*
(knife or scissors)
[in the above hand the fourth and the little fingers extended]
5. *mayūra* (peacock)
[The third finger is joined to the thumb extending the other fingers]
6. *ardhacandra* (half-moon)
[The thumb of the *patākā* hand is stretched]
7. *arālā* (curved)
[first finger of the above hand curved]
8. *śukarūṇḍa* (parrot's beak)
[third finger of the above hand bent]

patākai
(same)

2. *tripatākai*

3. *kattarikai*
(The middle finger is extended)

3. *kartarimukha*
(The fourth finger is extended)

4. *ardhacandra*
(The fingers and the thumb form a curve)
5. *arālā*
(fourth finger and thumb curved and others straight)
6. *śukarūṇḍa*
(same)
4. *ilampirai*
(middle finger and the ring-finger bent and thumb separated)
5. *arūḷam*
(thumb curved, fourth finger bent and others slightly curved)
6. *śukarūṇḍa*
(Forefinger and thumb touch, ring-finger bent and other straight)

4. *ilampirai*
(middle finger and the ring-finger bent and thumb separated)

5. *arūḷam*
(thumb curved, fourth finger bent and others slightly curved)

6. *śukarūṇḍa*
(Forefinger and thumb touch, ring-finger bent and other straight)

9. *muṣṭi* (fist)
[four fingers bent to touch the palm, the thumb over them]
10. *śikhara*
(In the *muṣṭi* hand the thumb is raised)
11. *kapitham* (wood-apple)
[The fourth finger of the *śikhara* hand is bent over the thumb]
12. *khaṭakāmukha*
(The middle and fourth fingers of the *kapitha* hand touch the thumb)
13. *sūci* (needle)
[The fourth finger of the *katakanukha* is raised]
14. *candrakalā*
(The thumb of the *sūci* hand is raised)
15. *padmakōśa* (lotus-bud)
[The fingers are separated and a little bent, the palm hollowed a little]
16. *sarpaśīrṣa* (serpent's head)
[The middle of the *patākā* hand is hollowed]
17. *margaśīrṣa* (deer's head)
[In the *sarpaśīrṣa* hand, the thumb and little finger are extended]

7. *muṣṭi*
(same)

8. *śikhara*
(same)

9. *kapitham*
(same)

10. *katakanukha*
(forefinger and thumb touch, rest extended)

11. *sūci*
(middle finger and the thumb bend and join the forefinger, the rest bent)

12. *padmakōśa*
(fingers bent but not touching)

13. *sarpaśīrṣa*
(same)

14. *margaśīrṣa*
(In the *sarpaśīrṣa* hand, thumb and little finger are raised and other pointing down)

12. *padmakōśikam*
(fingers bent, palm hollowed a little)

13. *aravaśīrṣas*
(same)

14. *māntalai*
(In the *sarpaśīrṣa* hand, thumb and little finger are raised, the rest bent forward)

18. *sinhamukha* (lion's face)
[The tips of the middle and third fingers touch the thumb, others extended]

19. *lāṅgūla* (tail)
[The third finger of the *padmakosa* hand is bent]

20. *alāpadma*
(four fingers separated, inclining to the little finger)

21. *catura*
(The thumb touches the base of the third finger, the first and the second fingers stretched, little finger stretched separately)

22. *bhramara* (bee)
[second finger and thumb touching the bent forefinger, the other fingers extended]

23 to 28. Named above in the list (not known)

29. *ūrṇanābha* (spider)
[The fingers of the *padmakosa* hand are bent further]
15. *kāṅgula*
(middle and fourth finger and thumb separated, ring-finger bent, little finger raised.)

16. *alāpadma*
(four-fingers inclining to the palm)

17. *catura*
(four fingers stretched, thumb bent near little finger)

18. *bhramara*
(middle finger and thumb crossing, forefinger bent, the other fingers raised)

19 to 22 & 24. named above (not known)

23. *ūrṇanābha*
(same)
15. *kāṅgula*
(middle and fourth finger and thumb joined, ring-finger bent, little finger raised)

16. *alāpadma*
(all fingers separated)

16. *catura*

18. *bhramara*
(ring-finger and middle finger joining and slanting to the right thumb jointly inside, forefinger and little finger bent over them)

19 to 23. (not known)

24. *terinilai*
(all fingers spread out and bent)
30. *bāṇa* (arrow)
[little finger extended, other fingers joined and touching the thumb]

31. *rdhasūcikā* (half needle)
[forefinger of *kapitha* hand raise]
25. *dūpan*
(middle finger stretched, forefinger bent half)

26. *pisācam* (evil-spirit)
[Except the thumb and forefingers, other fingers stand together]

27. *meynūlai*
(Four fingers extended and thumb over the forefinger)

28. *śāntani*
(Except thumb all the four fingers stand separate)

29. *ilatai*
(Middle finger and forefinger stretched, thumb joins below them, other fingers stretched)

30. *kapotani*
(In the *patākā* hand, the thumb stands apart)

31. *makara-mukham*
(The thumb and the forefinger stand erect and join, the rest three stand apart)

32. *valampuri*
(little finger and the thumb erect, the forefinger bent inside, the others stretched)

33. *pindi*

(The forefinger, the middle finger and the ring-finger join and bend inwards, thumb erect or fourfingers joined and bend thumb over them. It is similar to *mausi*)

The *saṃyuta* hands are twenty-three or twenty-four in number in the *Abhinaya-darpana*, twelve or thirteen in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, and fifteen in Tamil works.

Abhinaya-darpana *añjali*, *kapota*, *karkata*, *svastika*, *dola*, *puṣpapuṭa*, *utsaṅga*, *śivaliṅga*, *khaṭakā-varṇamāna*, *kartari-svastika*, *śakaṭa*, *śaṅkha*, *cakra*, *sampuṭa*, *pāśa*, *kīlaka*, *matsya*, *kūrma*, *varāha*, *garuḍa*, *nāga-bandha*, *khaṭvā*, *bheruṇḍa*. (*avahittha* is also added in one edition)

Nāṭya-śāstra *añjali*, *kapota*, *karkata*, *svastika*, *kāṭakavartamāna*, (Chapter IX, verses 8 to 10) *utsaṅga*, *niśāda*, *dala*, *puṣpapuṭa*, *makara*, *gojadanta*, *avabhrta*, *vardhamāna*

Tamil works .. *añjali*, *puṣpāñjali*, *padmāñjali*, *kapota*, *karkata*, *svastika*, *kāṭakā-varuttam*, *niśāda*, *tora*, *urcaṅga*, *puṣpapuṭa*, *makara*, *śayanta*, *abhayaḥastam* and *vartamāna*

The details of the fingers-poses relating to the combined hands (*saṃyuta*) gestures are as follows :

Abhinaya-darpana

1. *añjali* (salutation)
[two *patāka* hands joined palm to palm]
2. *kapota* (dove)
[two *añjali* hands meet at side, base and top]
3. *karkata* (crab)
[fingers interlocked]
4. *svastika*
(two *patākā* hands joined at the wrists)
5. *dolā* (swing)
[two *patākā* hands placed on the thigh]
6. *puṣpapuṭa* (flower basket)
[*carpaśrṅga* hands pressed close]
7. *utsaṅga*
(*mṛgaśrṅga* hand held touching opposite arm pit)
8. *śivaliṅga*
(*ardhaśandra* with left hand and *śikhara* with right hand)
9. *Kāṭaka-varṇamāna*
(one *kāṭakamukha* hand placed on another)
10. *kartari-svastika*
(*Kartarimukha* hands are crossed)
11. *śakaṭa* (chariot)
[*bhramara* hand with thumb and little finger extended]

Nāṭya-śāstra

1. *añjali*
(same)
2. *kapota*
(same)
3. *karkata*
(same)
4. *svastika*
(same)
5. *dola*
(two *patākā* hands hanging down)
6. *puṣpapuṭa*
(same)
7. *utsaṅga*
(*arāla* hands placed one on another other)
8. *khaṭakā-varṇamāna*
(same)

Tamil works

1. *añjali*
(same)
2. *kapota*
(same)
3. *karkataṭam*
(same)
4. *svastikaṭam*
(same)
5. *toraṭam*
(same)
6. *pūputam*
(same)
7. *utsaṅgam*
(*pirakai* hand and *arāla* hand standing on wrists)
8. *kāṭakavaruttam*
(same)

....

....

12. *śaṅkha* (conch)
[thumbs of *śikhara* hands joined and fore-
finger extended]

13. *cakra* (discus)
[*ardhacandra* hands askance, palms in con-
tact]

14. *sampulā* (casket)
[The fingers of the *cakra* hands are bent]

15. *pāśa*
[The forefingers of the *śucī* hand are bent
and interlocked]

16. *kīlaka*
[The little fingers of the *mṛgaśīrṣa* hand are
interlocked]

17. *matsya* (fish)
[the *patāka* hands top downwards and
little fingers extended]

18. *kārma* (tortoise)
[The ends of the fingers of the *cakra* hand
are bent except thumb and little finger]

19. *varāha* (boar)
[*mṛgaśīrṣa* hands one on another, back to
back, the thumb and the little finger
interlinked]

9. *makara*
(*patāka* hands with thumb raised
or turned down and placed on
each other)

9. *makaram*
(one *kapota* hand placed above
the other)

20. *garuḍa*
(*ardhacandra* hands held with palms askance
and thumb interlocked)

21. *nāga-bandha*
(*carpaśīras* hands crossed)

22. *khaṭvā* (cot)
[The thumbs and the forefingers of the
cakra hands are left free]

23. *śikharandā*
(wrists of the *kapittha* hands joined)

24. *avahitā*
(two *clāpādma* hands held on the chest)

10. *avahitā*
(two *śukavandā* hands placed in
the breast and slowly lowered)

11. *niṣadha*
(left hand holding right arm
above the elbow and right hand
touching the left arm)

12. *gaṇḍanta*
(The *carpaśīras* hands touching the
opposite arms between shoulder
and elbow)

13. *vardhamāna*
(The *mukula* hand is clasped by
the *kapittha* hand from opposite
directions)

12. *vardhamānam*
(same)

13. *padmāñjali*
(both *padmavakāśa* hands joined)

10. *abhaya-hastam*
(same)

11. *niṣada*
(same)

In addition to the *asamyuta* and *samyuta* hands, there are the *nytta-hastas* (called in Tamil *tezhirkai* or *nirutlakai*). They have no special meaning and are used in pure *nytta* to add beauty, grace and elegance to the dance poses. They are selections from the *asamyuta* and *samyuta* hands and are enumerated differently in the *Abhinaya-darpana*, *Nāṭya-sāstra* and Tamil works.

According to the *Abhinaya-darpana* there are thirteen *nytta-hastas*. *patākā, svastika, dola, aṅjali, kataka-vartamāna, śakata, pāśa, kīlaka, kapittha, śikhara, kūrma, haṁsāsya* and *ālapadma*.

There are twenty-seven *nytta-hastas* according to the *Nāṭya-sāstra*. *caturasra, udyōtta, talamukha, svastika, viprakīrṇa, arāla, kṛtakāmukha, aviddhavaktra, sūcyāsya, recita, ardharecita, uttāna-vañcita, pallava, nitamba, keśa-bandha, latā, karihasta, pakṣavañcitaka, pakṣapradhyotaka, garuda-pakṣa, daṇḍapakṣa, ūrdhva-maṇḍalī, muṣṭika-svastika, nalina, padmakōśa, ālapallava, ulbana, lalita* and *valita*.

(Thus according to Bharata, twenty-four *asamyuta* and thirteen *samyuta* and twenty-seven *nytta-hastas* make up sixty-four hand-gestures. According to the *Abhinaya-darpana*, the total is fifty-one hand-gestures.)

According to Tamil works—thirty (i.e., *Suddhānandapra-kāśam* quoted in the *Silappadikaram*). *caturasram, uttuvidam, talamukham, svastikam, viprakīrṇam, ardharecitam, arālakakāmukham, āvithavattiram, sūcīmukham, recitam, uttānavañcitam, pallavam, nitambam, gajadantam, ilatai, karikkai, pakkavañcitam, pakkapratyogam, garuḍapakkam, daṇḍapakkam,*

There are the twenty-six *nytta-hastas* stated by Bharata plus *gajadantam, pakkamaṇḍalī, uromaṇḍalī* and *uraḥpārsvārdhamāṇḍalī*. *ūrdhvamaṇḍalī, pakkamaṇḍalī, uromaṇḍalī, uraḥpārsvārdhamāṇḍalī, muṣṭikasvastikam, nalinīpadmakōśam, ālapadmam, urpaṇam, ilalilai* and *valilai*.

Bharata and the Tamil work describe the *nytta-hastas* in detail.

CĀRIS

According to Bharata's *Nāṭya-sāstra*, *cāris* are thirty-two in number and are classified as earthly (*bhauṁa*) and heavenly (*ākāśa-gaṁi*). The *Abhinaya-darpana* refers to *cāris*. Thus the two works differ in this respect.

MAṆḌALAS

According to Bharata's *Nāṭya-sāstra*, they are twenty in number and are classified as earthly and heavenly. But the *Abhinaya-darpana* refers only to ten *maṇḍalas*. Here also the two works differ.

THE END

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